

# **IOWA BIRD LIFE**

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**IOWA ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION**



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*The Iowa Ornithologists' Union, founded in 1923, encourages interest in the identification, study, and protection of birds in Iowa and seeks to unite those who have these interests in common. Iowa Bird Life and IOU News are quarterly publications of the Union.*

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# Meet an Iowa Birder – Bill Scheible

Chris Edwards



*Bill Scheible, CREW Wildlife and Environmental Area, Collier, Florida, 12 April 2015. Photograph by Linda Rudolph, Coralville, IA.*

Dr. William “Bill” Scheible is well known in the Iowa birding community for his sharp wit and his active participation in the Iowa Ornithologists’ Union. Indeed, Bill is one of the funniest people I know. He is also an excellent birder, a world traveler, a citizen scientist, a mentor to young birders, a strong proponent of conservation, and a pleasant birding companion.

A retired radiologist, Bill lives on a hill overlooking downtown Cedar Rapids, not far from Cedar Lake. His home also overlooks St. Luke’s Hospital, where he was born. While his father served as a B-29 bomber pilot flying missions over the Pacific, Bill spent his early years living with his mother and maternal grandparents in Cedar Rapids. His grandfather was a birder before that term was invented, and he

took young Bill on hikes through the woodlands and wetlands of Linn County. Before long Bill could identify orioles, catbirds, thrashers, and many other common birds. Those early experiences were instrumental in sparking his later interests in the natural world.

Bill’s father returned home after World War II, but was recalled to active duty in the Air Force during the Korean War. Over the next decade the family relocated several times, first to San Antonio, Texas, where Bill says he “peaked in the fourth grade.” The family then moved to Tokyo, Japan for three years. It was not as much of a culture shock as one might think. Bill says, “The base where we lived was so insulated from Japanese society that it may as well have been in Kansas.” In 1958 the family relocated to West Lafayette, Indiana, where Bill attended high school. He did well academically, but his interests also included “shenanigans, mayhem, and tomfoolery” with his friends. He attended Purdue football and basketball games with his father, and became a lifelong sports fan.

In 1962 his father was transferred to Los Angeles, California, and shortly thereafter Bill enrolled at UCLA with an undeclared major. He took a variety of liberal arts courses, but found that he really enjoyed biology, chemistry, and other science classes. As a sophomore he gravitated to pre-med, and after graduation was accepted to the UCLA School of Medicine. During his eight years at UCLA, Bill attended virtually every home basketball game, and claims he helped John Wooden win six national championships during that time.

After medical school, Bill interned at Los Angeles County Hospital, a stressful, exhausting, trial by fire. He was captivated by radiology, and went on to a four-year residency in radiology at the University of California at San Diego, followed by a fellowship in computed tomography (CT) in the “25th grade” of his academic career. His time in southern California also included a two-year stint in the U.S. Navy, stationed in Orange County as the base radiologist. He then joined the medical school faculty at UCSD. While in San Diego, Bill married and had two children. In 1984 the family left for Portland, Oregon (“fewer people, more trees”) where Bill joined a private radiology practice.

While Bill focused largely on career and family, he did maintain an interest in the natural world. While volunteering for Earthwatch, he banded raptors in Nevada, helped establish a MAPS station in Alaska, and searched for ptarmigan in Montana. In May 1994, while visiting his daughter at his future son-in-law’s parents’ home in rural Vermont, he had an epiphany. While hiking in the woods there he found himself surrounded by birds – Scarlet Tanagers, Wood Thrushes, Ovenbirds, American Redstarts – and it reignited a spark within him. After returning home to Oregon, he purchased a pair of Swift Audubon binoculars and a *National Geographic Field Guide to the Birds*, and started attending occasional Portland Audubon meetings and field trips.

In 1999 Bill’s career brought him back to Cedar Rapids, and that’s when his interest in birds really took off. He soon met Pete Wickham, a local birder and Coe College professor, whom Bill considers his birding mentor. Pete taught Bill about Iowa bird life and introduced him to all the best birding spots in eastern Iowa – Cone Marsh, Otter Creek Marsh, Hawkeye Wildlife Area, Shimek State Forest, and many more.

About the same time, Bill joined the IOU, and has been an active member ever since. He completed two terms on the Board of Directors and one term on the Projects Committee, and currently serves on the Publications and Records committees. According to Bill, the best part of serving on these committees is getting to know his fellow IOU members on a deeper level. “They come from varied backgrounds and all of them are incredibly talented,” he says. Bill was interim co-editor of *IOU News* while a permanent editor was being sought. He co-led with Jim Fuller an IOU trip to Southern California. And he has been a regular attendee at spring and fall meetings.

Bill’s favorite birding spot is his “local patch,” Squaw Creek Park. He recently tallied his list for the park and was surprised that he has seen 189 species within the park’s boundaries. He doesn’t place a heavy emphasis on listing, but he does keep a world list, an ABA Area list, state lists for Oregon and Iowa, county lists for four favorite Iowa counties – Linn, Delaware, Keokuk, and Johnson (or “South Linn County,” as he calls it) – and a yard list. The latter includes such diverse birds as Northern Shrike and Northern Bobwhite. Bill has a self-imposed two-hour chase limit for rare birds in Iowa, although with some arm-twisting he has been known to exceed it. Recent successful chases include the Brown

Booby at Red Rock Reservoir and the Ivory Gull at Quincy, Illinois. Bill retired from radiology in 2011 and soon after met his long-time goal to surpass 700 species in the ABA Area.

Bill has a lifelong love of travel. He has visited all fifty states multiple times, and has visited all the continents except Antarctica. He “collects” airports, having visited 108 domestic and 56 international for a total of 164. Many of these pre-date his time as an active birder. Birds provide only part of the pleasure he gets from travelling – he enjoys the cultures, scenery, and diverse wildlife as well. In recent years he has enjoyed travelling with good friend Linda Rudolph, and together they have visited Japan, Spain, Botswana, the Galapagos, and several U.S. locations. Bill remarks, “The Botswana trip was overwhelming, coming face-to-face with so many iconic animals, and also realizing the king of beasts is really just an overgrown, lazy housecat.” New Zealand was one of his favorite countries to visit, with “spectacular scenery and friendly, genuinely happy people.” Another memorable trip was with Ross Silcock to several remote Pacific islands, including places where Bill’s father was stationed during World War II. Someday he hopes to explore the British Isles – he’s been to England eight times but so far hasn’t ventured beyond Heathrow Airport.

Bill is drawn to citizen science projects. He enjoyed participating in the Iowa Breeding Bird Atlas II project, which satisfied his urge to explore new areas and afforded an opportunity to observe interesting bird behavior. “The study of birds is fascinating, and I believe I learn something every time I venture afield,” says Bill. “I enjoy birding some of Iowa’s less-visited counties and discovering what can be found there. This doesn’t usually include good restaurants, however.” Bill conducted a Breeding Bird Survey route in Linn and Benton counties for four years and is a frequent contributor to the IOU Field Reports. He is a regular on the Cedar Rapids and Iowa City Christmas Bird Counts, although his reputation with the latter count is shaky after reporting two pink flamingos from a North Liberty yard.

Bill frequently travels to Oregon, where his son and daughter and their families live. Having four school-age grandchildren, Bill is passionate about introducing young people to the joys of the outdoors, not just for the sake of birds but for the future of the planet. Bill has embraced the fledgling Iowa Young Birders group founded by Carl Bendorf. He serves on the Board of Directors and helps lead field trips. “It’s a great way to get young people interested and involved in birds – they’re the future of the IOU,” says Bill.

Besides birds and travel, Bill is a man of many other interests, and considers himself “a dilettante – an interest in everything, an expert in nothing.” He is an avid reader, especially of non-fiction, including history, World War II, aviation, automobiles, and trains. Books waiting to be read are stored in his oven, which perhaps attests to his cooking skills as much as his interest in books. His musical tastes range from classical to zydeco to Led Zeppelin. He’s a die-hard Chicago Cubs fan and often attends Cedar Rapids Kernels games. He collects license plates and has more than a thousand varieties from all fifty states in his basement. His garage houses a silver 1971 Chevrolet Camaro which he purchased new for \$3,300. I’m still waiting for a birding expedition with Bill in that classic. Just think how fast we could get to Saylorsville for the latest rarity – less than two hours for sure!

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# Field Reports—Spring 2015

*Tyler M. Harms*



*Tyler M. Harms*

## WEATHER

Despite above-average precipitation in winter and an abundance of rain in May, spring 2015 was abnormally dry, similar to 2014. Temperatures, however, were right at normal for spring, which was warmer than the last two spring seasons. March was the 53rd warmest and 7th driest in 143 years of records, with temperatures averaging a single degree above normal and precipitation 1.55 inches below normal. Despite temperatures being only slightly above normal, the high variation in temperature (-17 to +90 degrees) throughout the month has only been recorded three other times in 143 years of records. The first six days of the month were very cold with a low of -17 degrees recorded on 5 March in Stanley and daytime highs of only

9 degrees recorded across much of eastern Iowa. However, temperatures quickly became mild with the first 70-degree reading on 15 March across much western Iowa climbing to 90 degrees in Sioux City on 16 March. This marked the earliest 90-degree reading in Iowa by six days. Cool weather returned for a few days with temperatures dropping back into the single digits before returning to mild for the end of March. Variability in temperature was matched with extremely dynamic precipitation events near the end of March. Only 0.01 inches of precipitation fell across the state from the 4-21 March. However, two events in the fourth week produced snow in northeast Iowa and the first thunderstorms across much of the western portion of the state. MacGregor reported 12 inches of wet snow on 22 March. On 24 March, freezing rain and snow fell across the northern portion of the state while thunderstorms produced 1.32 inches of rain in Taylor County.

Similar to March, April was warm and dry with temperatures averaging 1.8 degrees above normal and precipitation averaging 0.14 inches below normal. Temperatures remained relatively mild throughout much of the month with the exception of a cold snap that brought a hard freeze to north central and northeastern Iowa on 22-23 March with temperatures as low as 22 degrees recorded. Precipitation was highly variable across the state with as much as 6.88 inches of total precipitation reported in Lake Mills while extreme northwestern Iowa experienced moderate drought conditions. The largest precipitation event occurred on 7-9 March producing 4.44 inches of rain in and around Lake Mills. Snowfall occurred only twice in April resulting in a monthly statewide average of only 0.2

inches, which is 1.4 inches below normal. The seasonal snow total was only 26.8 inches (5.4 inches below normal), making 2015 only the second season to record a below average snow total in the past nine seasons.

Similar to 2014, May temperatures were nearly normal with an average of 60 degrees reported. However, measurable amounts of precipitation fell frequently across the state with a statewide average of 5.08 inches reported, 0.52 inches above normal. Despite a few cold days, temperatures varied the least since 1995. In fact, this is the first May since that year in which temperatures failed to reach 90 degrees. Measurable precipitation fell an average of 17 days across much of the state with Red Oak receiving measurable precipitation on 22 days and trace amounts on an additional three days. The wettest period of the month came on 23-27 May when an average of 1.56 inches of rain fell. Monthly totals were highest in southwestern Iowa with 9.21 inches reported near Denison. Normal amounts of precipitation were reported across much of the central third of the state. This was the 46th warmest and 70th wettest spring on record. Unless things turn around, 2015 is on track to be a dry year. However, last spring was abnormally dry and 2014 ended up being the 14th wettest year in 142 years of records.

#### HABITAT, GENERAL TRENDS

The dry conditions this spring resulted in below-normal and consistent water levels at all the major reservoirs this spring. For example, Saylorville Reservoir hovered just above 836 feet elevation and Red Rock Reservoir at about 742 feet elevation. Although this provided ample habitat for shorebirds, it did not result in a concentration of shorebirds at either of these locations. Habitat conditions at wetlands across Iowa were favorable despite the dry conditions this spring, likely a result of the surplus of moisture from an abundance of moisture in 2014. The dry conditions also allowed the opportunity for management, particularly prescribed burning, to be conducted on many of Iowa's grasslands. This presumably will lead to optimum habitat conditions on these areas leading into the summer season.

For birds, this was an uneventful spring. The most notable trend was the drastic decline in waterfowl numbers. For example, the peak Mallard count this spring was 250 birds compared to the peak of 7,700 birds reported last year. I wonder if this is an actual decrease in numbers, or an artifact of reporting. Spring arrived right on time this year, which resulted in a relatively normal warbler migration with most species arriving on schedule in normal numbers. Despite the ideal habitat conditions for both waterfowl and shorebirds, few migrants of either group lingered late into spring. Overwintering birds were quick to depart this year, with last reports of species such as Brown Creeper, American Tree Sparrow, and Dark-eyed Junco two weeks earlier than last year.

Although it was a rather uneventful spring for rarities, we can still delight in seeing more of the regular birds. Birders near Mason City were excited to see a Northern Mockingbird, Connecticut Warbler, and Black-throated Blue Warbler in their area this spring. The Kellerton area hosted up to 40 Greater Prairie-Chickens on the lek at one time, which was quite a spectacle for many birders. Lastly, open-country birds such as Lapland Longspur and Horned Lark were more abundant this spring than last, offering some excitement along Iowa's rural roads in lingering winter conditions.

## UNUSUAL SPECIES

As mentioned above, this a below-normal year for rarities. Documentations were submitted for only nine accidental or casual species, the most notable of which were Iowa's 6th record of a Mottled Duck and a specimen of a Boreal Owl. Only two western rarities, Western Tanager and Lazuli Bunting, visited Iowa this spring, both of which seem to be becoming more regular in the state. A Black Vulture and Black-bellied Whistling-Duck were the only two southern visitors.

Nine species had record early arrivals falling within the range of the three earliest dates this year including Red-throated Loon, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, White-eyed Vireo, Cliff Swallow, Gray Catbird, Yellow Warbler, Palm Warbler, Canada Warbler, and Rose-breasted Grosbeak. Surprisingly, this list includes far more than the four record early species reported last spring. Solitary Sandpiper, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, and American Pipit lingered into the range of the three latest dates, which was also more species than last spring.

## SPECIES DATA

All CAPS = Accidental or Casual species, \* = documented. County names are in italics. Full names of contributors are at the end of the article. Abbreviations used; **ad** = adult, **alt** = alternate (plumage), **A** = area, **BCA** = Bird Conservation Area, **BBS** = breeding bird survey, **imm** = immature, **juv** = juvenile, **L** = lake, **M** = marsh, **m.ob.** = many observers, **NWR** = national wildlife refuge, **P** = park, **ph** = photo, **R** = river, **RA** = recreation area, **Res** = reservoir, **se half** = diagonal se half, **SF** = state forest, **SL** = sewage lagoons, **Sl** = slough, **SP** = state park, **WA** = wildlife area, **yg** = young.

Key to maps: shading = species reported in county. In most cases, the species was probably nesting in the county although evidence was presented only in a few cases.

**BLACK-BELLIED WHISTLING-DUCK:** A single bird was photographed 13 May at a private pond in *Fremont* (\*MD-ph).

**Greater White-fronted Goose:** Similar to the past few years, migration of this species peaked in mid-Mar with 6,000 on 12 Mar at Snyder Bend *Woodbury* (GLV) and 5,000 at Cardinal M *Winneshiek* (LR). A hybrid Greater White-fronted/Snow Goose was photographed at Otter Creek M *Tama* on 27 May (BSC-ph).

**Snow Goose:** Migration peaked across the state in mid-Mar with the high count of 16,000 at Trumbull L *Clay* on 14 Mar (LAS) and other counts of 8,000 on 15 Mar at Runnells WA *Marion* (JG), 7,500 flyovers on 16 Mar at Brenton Arboretum *Dallas* (JB), and 7,000 flyovers on 15 Mar at Cardinal M *Winneshiek* (LR). The last birds

were observed 25 May at Sandhill L *Woodbury* (GLV).

**Ross's Goose:** The peak of 45 on 16 Mar in *Dallas* (JB) was far fewer than last year. Reports from 5 additional counties with the last on 25 Apr at Owego Wetlands *Woodbury* (BFH).

**Cackling Goose:** Only 3 reports of far fewer birds this spring than in past springs: 10 on 13 Mar at Cardinal M *Winneshiek* (LR), 3 on 16 Mar at Fox R *Van Buren* (CRE), and 1 on 9 May at Dan Greene Sl *Clay* (LAS).

**Canada Goose:** A high count of 900 on 1 Mar on the Iowa R in Coralville *Johnson* (MHB).

**Mute Swan:** Multiple reports of presumably the same 1-2 ad from 9 Mar-18 Apr at Cone M *Louisa* (m.ob.). These 2 ad





*Trumpeter Swan, Eagle L, Hancock, 22 May 2015. Photography by Tyler M. Harms, Ames, IA.*



*Gadwall, Saylorville Res, Polk, 15 April 2015. Photograph by Larry Dau, Boone, IA.*

were then seen attending 6 juvs on 15 May at Cone M Louisa (BCC). An additional report of 1 ad on 14 Apr at a private pond in Linn (BSc).

**Trumpeter Swan:** This species is continuing to expand its range in Iowa, reported in 17 counties this spring. Most reports were from central Iowa east to the Mississippi R with 2 reports in western Iowa: 2 on 23 Apr at Jones P Monona (GLV) and 2 on 17 May in Fremont (KDy).

**Tundra Swan:** No reports.

**Wood Duck:** High count of 60 on 23 May at Union Sl NWR Kossuth (WWH) is six times greater than the high count last spring.

**Gadwall:** First: 2 on 8 Mar in Dallas (JB). Most: 300 on 28 Mar at Swan L, Hawkeye WA Johnson (CRE). Last: 3 on 24 May at Spring Run Dickinson (MHB).

**American Wigeon:** Migration peaked with 300 on 28 Mar at Swan L, Hawkeye WA Johnson (CRE), much higher than last year's peak of 22. The first bird was observed 9 Mar at New L Woodbury (GLV) and the last on 30 May at Kettleson-Hogsback WA Dickinson (LAS).

**American Black Duck:** Only 3 reports: 1 on 8 Mar in Dallas (JB), 2 on 9 Mar

at Cedar L Linn (BSc), and 1 on 23 May in Appanoose (TNJ).

**Mallard:** Only 4 reports of this species with numbers far lower than last year. The high count was 250 on 12 Mar at Cardinal M Winneshiek (LR).

**MOTTLED DUCK:** A single bird on 26 Apr at Dunbar Sl Greene (\*AB) was Iowa's 6th record of this species.

**Blue-winged Teal:** First: 2 on 12 Mar at Marsh Farm Wetland Dallas (JG). Most: 200 on 13 Apr at Otter Creek M Tama (CRE).

**Blue-winged X Cinnamon Teal:** All: 1 on 10-11 Apr at Swan Lake SP Carroll (LGD, RIA/PHA), 1 on 18 Apr at Brower Sl Woodbury (GLV), and 1 on 23 Apr at Clear L Cerro Gordo (CJF, BVL).

**Cinnamon Teal:** Single males were observed 10-11 Apr at Swan Lake SP Carroll (LGD, RIA/PHA, DTh) and 18 Apr at Brower Sl Woodbury (GLV); 2 pairs were reported on 23 April at Brower Sl, Woodbury (Bob Nickolson).

**Northern Shoveler:** Peak of 410 on 3 Apr at Saylorville Res Polk (RLC) with the first on 11 Mar at Gray's Lake P Polk (JB) and last on 31 May at Round Pond, Hawkeye WA Johnson (MHB).



*Blue-winged Teal, Swan Lake P, Carroll, 22 April 2015. Photograph by Larry Dau, Boone, IA.*



*Cinnamon Teal, Swan Lake P, Carroll, 10 April 2015. Photograph by Larry Dau, Boone, IA.*

**Northern Pintail:** Migration peaked with 102 on 14 Mar at Brownville WA Mitchell (PH), far fewer than the peak of 2,000 last year. First birds arrived 8 Mar in Dallas (JB) and the last were two males on 30 May in Dickinson (LAS).

**Green-winged Teal:** First: 5 on 11 Mar in Dallas (JB). Most: 143 on 3 Apr at Saylorville Res Polk (RLC). Last: 1 on 27 May at Otter Creek M Tama (BSc).

**Canvasback:** Peak occurred away from the Mississippi R with 500 on 21 Mar at Crystal Hills WA Hancock (JB). First arrived on 13 Mar at Clear L Cerro Gordo (PH) and last seen 24 May at Union Sl NWR Kosuth (MCK).

**Redhead:** Peak numbers occurred in central and north-central Iowa with 132 on 24 Mar at Saylorville Res Polk (RLC) and 120 on 21 Mar at Crystal Hills WA Hancock (JB). The last 3 birds were observed on 26 May at Grovers L Dickinson (MHB).

**Ring-necked Duck:** First: 15 on 16 Mar at Marsh Farm Wetland Dallas (JB). Most: 175 on 21 Mar at Mallard M Cerro Gordo (JB). Last: 6 on 27 May at Otter Creek M Tama (BSc).

**Greater Scaup:** Reported in 6 counties with the high count of 10 on 22 Mar at Say-

lorville Res Polk (RLC), the first on 16 Mar at Marsh Farm Wetland Dallas (JB), and the last on 11 May at Sandy Beach, Coralville Res Johnson (JF).

**Lesser Scaup:** Migration started with 13 on 10 Mar at Iowa R Johnson (MHB) and peaked with 2,000 on 19 Apr at Clear L Cerro Gordo (PH). The last bird was observed 25 May at Cedar L Linn (BSc).

**Surf Scoter:** Single birds were reported on 8 Mar at Lock & Dam 14, Mississippi R Scott (TGS), 31 Mar at South Sabula L Jackson (DAS), and on 11-12 Apr at Lake MacBride SP Johnson (JF, JLF, MHB, CRE)

**White-winged Scoter:** A single female was observed in Ottumwa Wapello on 18 Mar (SJD-ph).

**Black Scoter:** A single male was observed 8-9 Apr at the Jewell SL Hamilton (SJD-ph, DTh). Presumably the same molting male was observed again on 4 May at Anderson L Hamilton (SJD).

**Long-tailed Duck:** A single male was observed 8 Mar at Lock & Dam 14, Mississippi R Scott (TGS) and a juvenile female on 28 Mar at Saylorville Res Polk (SJD-ph, DTh, RIA/PHA).

**Bufflehead:** Reported numbers of this species are declining in spring with only 19



*Northern Shoveler × Blue-winged Teal hybrid, Bays Branch WA, Guthrie, 18 April 2015. Photograph by Stephen J. Dinsmore, Ames, IA.*



*Canvasback, Terry Trueblood Rec Area, Johnson, 22 April 2015. Photograph by Mark Brown, Iowa City, IA.*

observed as the high count on 24 Mar at Saylorville Res *Polk* (RLC), fewer than the high count of 44 last year and 833 in 2013. The last 2 birds were observed on 30 Apr at Saylorville Res *Polk* (RLC).

**Common Goldeneye:** First: 4 on 10 Mar at Clear L *Cerro Gordo* (BVL). Most: 65 on 13 Mar at Clear L *Cerro Gordo* (PH). Last: 1 on 4 Apr at Lake Anita SP *Cass* (RIA/PHA).

**Hooded Merganser:** The first birds were observed on 12 Mar on the Iowa R *Johnson* (MHB).

**Common Merganser:** Only 4 reports from Mar: 15 on 1 Mar on the Iowa R *Johnson* (MHB), 8 on 10 Mar at Clear L *Cerro Gordo* (BVL), 5 on 12 Mar at Gray's Lake P *Polk* (JB), and 40 on 13 Mar at Clear L *Cerro Gordo* (PH).

**Red-breasted Merganser:** Similar to other waterfowl, the peak of 50 on 11 Apr at Lake McBride SP *Johnson* (MHB) was far fewer than last year. The first birds were observed on 17 Mar at Lake McBride SP *Johnson* (LGR) and last on 13 May at Coralville Res *Johnson* (JF).

**Ruddy Duck:** Migration peaked with 506 on 9 Apr at Rapp P *Page* (KDy) and 146 on 16 Apr at Saylorville Res *Polk* (RLC). The

first was observed 14 Mar at Pool Sl *Allamakee* (LR) and last on 31 May at Sandhill L *Woodbury* (GLV).

**Northern Bobwhite:** Single birds reported on 21 Mar at Banner Flats WA *Warren* (JG), 4 May in *Jones* (BR), 23 May in *Muscatine* (CRE), 29 May at Sparks Cemetery *Boone* (LGD), and 30 May at Loess Hills WA *Monona* (GLV). A report of 17 birds on 31 May in *Ringgold* (JRL) was the most in recent years.

**Gray Partridge:** Reported in 7 counties with the high of 6 on 6 May in *Hamilton* (KRB).

**Ring-necked Pheasant:** A high of 55 was reported on 5 Mar at Lime Springs *Howard* (LR).

**Greater Prairie-Chicken:** Two reports from the Kellerton lek *Ringgold*: 38 on 31 Mar (DTh) and 28 on the Iowa Young Birders field trip on 11 Apr (WWH). One report of 5 on 6 Apr in *Ringgold* (JRL) was away from the Kellerton lek.

**Red-throated Loon:** A single bird observed 1 Apr at Saylorville Res *Polk* (DTh-details) was the third earliest record. Presumably the same bird was observed 6 Apr at Saylorville Res *Polk* (RIA/PHA).



*Surf Scoter, Lake Macbride SP, Johnson, 11 April 2015. Photograph by Mark Brown, Iowa City, IA.*

**Common Loon:** Reports of 1-3 birds from 13 counties with the first on 23 Mar at Saylorville Res *Polk* (DCH) and last on 15 May at Lake Sugema Van Buren (KVS).

**Pied-billed Grebe:** Reports of 11 birds on 29 Apr and 3 May at Terry Trueblood RA Johnson (MHB) were the high with the first on 10 Mar on the Iowa R Johnson (MHB).

**Horned Grebe:** First: 1 on 18 Mar at Gray's Lake P *Polk* (JB). Most: 15 on 18 Apr at Saylorville Res *Polk* (RLC). Last: 1 on 15 May at Hawkeye WA Johnson (JF).

**Red-necked Grebe:** Fewer reports than last year: 1 from 3-22 May at Trumbull L *Clay* (SJD) and 2 on 27 May at Lake Cona Toma Cerro Gordo (RGo, CJF, BVL).

**Eared Grebe:** Similar to Horned Grebe, fewer reports than last year: 2 on 8 Apr at Clear L Cerro Gordo (BVL), 1 on 29 Apr at Bays Branch WA Guthrie (DTh), 1 on 7 May at Rapp P *Page* (KDy), and 1 on 27 May at Otter Creek M *Tama* (BSc).

**Western Grebe:** All: 1 on 19 Apr at Saylorville Res *Polk* (SJD), 2 on 10 May at Stony L Dickinson (ET), 3 on 22 May at Trumbull L *Clay* (SJD), 4 on 22 May at Mud



*American Bittern, Iowa City, Johnson, 16 April 2015. Photograph by Mark Brown, Iowa City, IA.*

L *Clay* (SJD), and 1 on 22 May at South Twin L *Calhoun* (SJD).

**Neotropic Cormorant:** A single sub-adult was observed on 23 May at Union Sl NWR (SJD-details, WWH-details) on a field trip as part of the Spring IOU Meeting.

**Double-crested Cormorant:** The high count of 70 on 5 Apr at Hawkeye WA Johnson (MHB) with the first on 16 Mar at Lake Fisher P *Davis* (CRE) and last on 29 May at George Wyth SP *Black Hawk* (SK).

**American White Pelican:** High counts of 700 at Eagle L WA *Hancock* (PH) and 300 at Clear L Cerro Gordo (PH), both on 19 Apr, and 210 on 7 May at Hawkeye WA Johnson (MHB).

**American Bittern:** Reports of 1-3 from 11 counties with the first on 14 Apr at Otter Creek M *Tama* (DTh) and last on 23 May at Union Sl NWR *Kossuth* (WWH) and at State Line M *Kossuth* (PH).



*Snowy Egret, Kattleson-Hogsback WA, Dickinson, 13 May 2015. Photograph by Joe Jungers, Hoppers, IA.*

**Least Bittern:** Only 2 reports: 1 on 23 May at Blazing Star WPA *Kossuth* (PH) and 1 on 30 May at Cone M *Louisa* (BSc).

**Great Blue Heron:** Most: 39 on 23 May at Cone M *Louisa* (CRE).

**Great Egret:** Reported in 7 counties with the first on 3 Apr at Hawkeye WA *Johnson* (MHB), high of 10 on 23 Apr at Badger L *Monona* (GLV), and last on 17 May at Hawkeye WA *Johnson* (MHB).

**Snowy Egret:** All: 1 on 5 May at Rapp P *Page* (KDY), 1 on 19 May at Saylorville Res *Polk* (SJD), and 1 on 23 May at Cone M *Louisa* (CRE).

**Cattle Egret:** High of 7 on 11 May at Brower Sl *Woodbury* (GLV) with the first on 17 Apr at Rapp P *Page* (KDY) and last on 19 May in *Madison* (DTh).

**Green Heron:** Single birds reported from 4 counties with the first on 29 Apr at Sand Point, Hawkeye WA *Johnson* (BR).

**Black-crowned Night-Heron:** The 10 on 14 Apr near *Zearing Story* (HZ) was the most reported in the past 3 years. Reports of 1-6 from 5 other counties.

**Yellow-crowned Night-Heron:** Two reports: 1 on 13 Apr at the Katoski Greenbelt *Black Hawk* (JH-ph) and 1 on 23 May at Sedan Bottoms WA *Appanoose* (TNJ).

**GLOSSY IBIS:** All: 1 on 25-26 Apr in *Woodbury* (BFH-ph), on 25 Apr at Luton WA *Woodbury* (\*JJ-ph), 1 on 27 Apr at Cone M *Louisa* (\*BC-ph), and 4 on 8 May at River-ton WA *Fremont* (KDY).

**White-faced Ibis:** Eight reports from 5 counties with the first on 16 Apr at Marsh Farm Wetland *Dallas* and high counts of 10 on 16 Apr at Marsh Farm Wetland *Dallas* (DTh) and 17 on 13 May at Dunbar Sl *Greene* (SJD).

**BLACK VULTURE:** One photographed on 22 May at Jester P *Polk* (\*NW-ph).

**Turkey Vulture:** The first bird was observed on 17 Mar at Living History Farms *Polk* (JB) with a high of 75 on 28 Mar at Coralville Res *Johnson* (MHB).

**Osprey:** Reports of 1-2 birds from 10 counties with the first on 26 Mar at Lake McBride SP *Johnson* (LGR).

**Mississippi Kite:** All: 2 on 23 May over Bob Cecil's yard *Polk* (RC), 1 on 28 May in *Adair* (DTh), and 1 on 30 May in Ottumwa *Wapello* (TNJ).

**Bald Eagle:** Most: 212 on 15 Mar at Saylorville Res *Polk* (BE).

**Northern Harrier:** Reports from 14 counties with the first on 8 Mar in *Dallas* (JB) and last on 24 May at Spring Run *Dickinson* (MHB).

**Sharp-shinned Hawk:** Singles reported on 30 Mar at Saylorville Res *Polk* (RLC), 10 Apr at Hawkeye WA *Johnson* (MHB), and 25 Apr in Cedar Rapids *Linn* (BR).

**Cooper's Hawk:** Only two reports: 1 on 25 Mar in *Washington* (WWH) and 1 on 10 Apr in *Linn* (BR).

**Red-shouldered Hawk:** Mostly singles reported in 7 counties with the first on 5



*Broad-winged Hawk, Huston P, Palo Alto, 10 May 2015. Photograph by Joe Jungers, Hospers, IA.*



*Sora, Maynard Reece WPA, Kossuth, 24 May 2015. Photography by Tyler M. Harms, Ames, IA.*

Mar in *Johnson* (CRE) and last on 18 May at the Croton Unit, Shimek SF *Lee* (CRE).

**Broad-winged Hawk:** First: 1 from 13-15 Apr at Coralville Res *Johnson* (JF). Most: 43 on 24 Apr at Waterworks P *Polk* (JB). Last: 1 on 30 May at Lime Creek Nature Center *Cerro Gordo* (BVL).

**Swainson's Hawk:** Only 3 reports: 2 on 22 Apr at Neal Smith NWR *Jasper* (KVS), 1 on 29 Apr at Gray's Lake P *Polk* (JB), and 1 on 28 May in *Mills* (DTh).

**Red-tailed Hawk:** All: 2 on 25 Mar in *Washington* (WWH), 1 dark morph on 25 Mar at Pleasant Creek RA *Linn* (BSc), 1 on 10 Apr in *Linn* (BR), and 2 on 23 May at Union Sl NWR *Kossuth* (WWH).

**Rough-legged Hawk:** First of 6 on 1 Mar and most of 10 on 7 Mar, both at Lime Springs *Howard* (LR). Last on 18 Apr in *Fayette* (CRE).

**Golden Eagle:** One on 26 Apr at Dunbar Sl *Greene* (HZ) was the only report.

**King Rail:** No reports.

**Virginia Rail:** Reported in 6 counties in May with the first 3 on 2 May at Errington M *Polk* (KDy) and last on 26 May at Grovers L *Dickinson* (MHB).

**Sora:** First: 1 on 13 Apr at Waterworks Prairie P *Johnson* (MHB). Most and last: 6 on 15 May at Errington M *Polk* (RLC).

**Common Gallinule:** Singles reported on 12 May at Brenton Sl *Dallas* (RIA/PHA, JB, JG) and on 23 May at Cone M *Louisa* (CRE).

**American Coot:** The first 146 birds were reported on 30 Mar at Saylorville Res *Polk* (RLC) and the high of 770 on 10 Apr at Hawkeye WA *Johnson* (MHB).

**Sandhill Crane:** Reported in 13 counties with the first on 9 Mar at Cone M *Louisa* (LGR), high of 18 on 30 Mar at Cardinal M *Winneshiek* (LR), and last on 23 May at Cone M *Louisa* (CRE).

**American Avocet:** First and most: 27 on 23 Apr at Saylorville Res *Polk* (SJD). Reported in 7 additional counties with the last 4 on 25 May at Sandhill L *Woodbury* (GLV).

**Black-necked Stilt:** All: 3 on 8 Apr at Amana Lily Pond *Iowa* (JF), 1 on 8 Apr at Hurstville Nature Area *Jackson* (BR), 3 on 11 Apr at Cone M *Louisa* (JF), 1 on 25 Apr at



*Lesser Yellowlegs, Boone, 18 April 2015.*  
*Photograph by Larry Dau, Boone, IA.*

Riverton WA *Fremont* (KDy), 2 on 4 May at Hawkeye WA *Johnson* (JF), 1 from 5-6 May at Sand Point, Hawkeye WA *Johnson* (JF), 4 including a copulating pair from 21-25 May at Green Island WA *Jackson* (DAS), and 1 on 24 May at Pintail M *Hardin* (MP, SJD).

**Black-bellied Plover:** First: 9 on 11 Apr at Union Hills WPA *Cerro Gordo* (RGo). Most: 30 on 14 Apr at Union Hills WPA *Cerro Gordo* (RGo). Last: 1 on 24 May at Pintail M *Hardin* (MP).

**American Golden-Plover:** Migration peaked with 75 on 26 Apr and 55 on 22 Apr, both in *Dallas* (BE, RLC). The first birds were observed 8 Apr at Union Hills WPA *Cerro Gordo* (RGo) and last on 27 May at Marsh Farm Wetland *Dallas* (JB).

**Semipalmated Plover:** Reported in 7 counties with the first on 17 Apr at Rapp P *Page*, peak of 60 on 21 May at Round Pond, Hawkeye WA *Johnson* (LGR), and last on 23 May at Cone M *Louisa* (CRE).

**Piping Plover:** Reported at 4 locations in May: 1 on 5 May at Dean *Appanoose* (TNJ), 1 on 6-7 May at Colo Ponds *Story* (MP, HZ, AC-ph), 1 on 19 May at Saylorville Res *Polk* (JB), and 1 on 19 May at George Wyth SP *Black Hawk* (TGS).



*Solitary Sandpiper, Pike Run WA, Muscatine, 26 April 2015. Photograph by Mark Brown, Iowa City, IA.*

**Killdeer:** The first bird was seen 11 Mar at Hurstville Nature Area *Jackson* (BR) and high count of 30 on 27 Mar at Neal Smith NWR *Jasper* (KVS).

**Spotted Sandpiper:** The first was reported on 20 Apr at Terry Trueblood RA *Johnson* (BR).

**Solitary Sandpiper:** First: 1 on 23 Apr at Squaw Creek P *Linn* (BSc). Most: 13 on 7 May at Hawkeye WA *Johnson* (MHB). Last: 1 on 30 May at Ingham-High WA *Emmet* (SJD-ph), the second latest record.

**Greater Yellowlegs:** Reports of 1-3 birds in 8 counties with the first on 28 Mar at Hawkeye WA *Johnson* (CRE) and the last on 19 Apr in *Hancock* (PH).

**Willet:** Migration peaked with 63 on 3 May at Sand Point, Hawkeye WA *Johnson* (BR) with the first bird on 24 Apr at Colo Ponds *Story* (MP) and last on 23 May at Cone M *Louisa* (CRE).

**Lesser Yellowlegs:** Reported in 9 counties with the first on 1 Apr at Hurstville Nature Area *Jackson* (BR), peak of 170 on 4 May at Mt. Sterling M *Van Buren* (CRE),

and last on 14 May at Hawkeye WA Johnson (MHB).

**Upland Sandpiper:** Only 5 reports: 2 on 11 Apr at Kellerton BCA Ringgold (WWH), 1 on 26 Apr at Wildin Prairie Kossuth (MCK), 3 on 27 Apr at the Kellerton BCA Ringgold (JLF), 1 on 10 May in Dickinson (ET), and 2 on 24 May at Blazing Star WPA Kossuth (MP).

**Whimbrel:** Three reports in May: 4 on 17 May at Frazer's Bend Fremont (KDY), 2 on 23 May at Saylorville Res Polk (JG), and 1 on 27 May at Hawkeye WA Johnson (JF).

**Hudsonian Godwit:** The first bird was reported on 24 Apr at Colo Ponds Story (MP) with a peak of 13 on 11 May at Bays Branch WA Guthrie (DTh). The last 4 birds were reported on 30 May at Dugout Creek WA Dickinson (LAS).

**Marbled Godwit:** Similar to Hudsonians, the first bird was observed on 16 Apr at Marsh Farm Wetland Dallas (JB) and the last on 23 May at Saylorville Res Polk (MHB).

**Ruddy Turnstone:** First: 2 on 6 May at Hawkeye WA Johnson (JF). Most: 10 on 22 May at Ingham-High WA Emmet (SJD). Last: 2 on 27 May at Kettleson Hogsback WA Dickinson (MHB).

**RUFF:** A single bird photographed on 2 May at Sand Point, Hawkeye WA Johnson (\*JF-ph).

**Stilt Sandpiper:** Reported in 6 counties with the first on 8 May at Saylorville Res Polk (RLC) and last on 23 May in Emmet (PH).

**Sanderling:** First: 2 on 25 Apr at Copeland Bend WA Fremont (KDY). Last: 4 on 25 May at Kettleson Hogsback WA Dickinson (LAS).

**Dunlin:** Migration peaked with 180 on 23 May at Dean Appanoose (TNJ). The first bird was observed on 8 Apr at Amana Lily

Pond Iowa (JF) and last on 23 May at Cone M Louisa (CRE).

**Baird's Sandpiper:** Reported in only 5 counties with the first on 18 Mar at Runnells WA Marion (SJD) and last on 17 May at Hawkeye WA Johnson (MHB).

**Least Sandpiper:** First: 1 on 3 Apr at Saylorville Res Polk (RLC). Most: 74 on 4 May at Fox River WA Van Buren (CRE). Last: 1 on 26 May at Kettleson Hogsback WA Dickinson (MHB).

**White-rumped Sandpiper:** Reported in 6 counties in May with the first on 2 May at Scales Point, Coralville Res Johnson (MHB), peak of 45 on 8 May at Saylorville Res Polk (RLC), and last on 31 May at Round Pond, Hawkeye WA Johnson (MHB).

**Pectoral Sandpiper:** Migration started with the first bird on 16 Mar at Fox River WA Van Buren (CRE) and peaked with 100 on 4 May at Mt. Sterling M Van Buren (CRE). The last bird was observed on 27 May at Kettleson Hogsback WA Dickinson (MHB).

**Semipalmated Sandpiper:** Reported in 5 counties with the first on 4 May in Dallas (JB), peak of 70 on 17 May at Hawkeye WA Johnson (MHB), and last on 27 May at Kettleson Hogsback WA Dickinson (MHB).

**Short-billed Dowitcher:** First: 18 on 5 May in Dallas (RLC). Most: 29 on 15 May at Cardinal M Winneshiek (PH). Last: 1 on 20 May at Terry Trueblood RA Johnson (MHB).

**Long-billed Dowitcher:** Reported in only 4 counties with the first on 11 Apr at Sandhill L Woodbury (BFH) and last on 9 May at Sycamore Bottoms Johnson (MHB).

**Wilson's Snipe:** Right on schedule, migration began on 17 Mar at Squaw Creek P Linn (BSc). The peak count of 55 on 5 Apr at Hawkeye WA Johnson (MHB) was slightly lower than last year.

**American Woodcock:** Only 7 reports from central and eastern Iowa with the first





*Ruddy Turnstone, Saylorville Res, Polk, 23 May 2015. Photograph by Mark Brown, Iowa City, IA.*

2 on 15 Mar at Lime Creek Nature Center Cerro Gordo (BVL).

**Wilson's Phalarope:** Similar to last year, migration began on 24 Apr at Colo Ponds Story (MP). The peak of 7 on 15 May in Winneshiek (PH) was significantly lower than the peak of 300 reported last year. The last 3 birds were reported 23 May near Iowa L Emmet (PH).

**Red-necked Phalarope:** Seven reports from across the state in May with the first on 19 May at Hawkeye WA Johnson (JF) and the last on 27 May at Little Wall L Hamilton (SJD).

**Bonaparte's Gull:** First: 3 on 31 Mar at Hendrickson M Story (MP). Most: 138 on 11 Apr at Little Storm L Buena Vista (LAS). Last: A rather late bird on 13 May at Deere Dike Dubuque (DAS-details).

**Laughing Gull:** No reports.

**Franklin's Gull:** Only 3 reports outside Polk and Johnson: 1 on 8 Apr at Hurstville Nature Area Jackson (BR), 10 on 23 May at



*Wilson's Snipe, Boone, 5 April 2015. Photograph by Larry Dau, Boone, IA.*

Union Slough NWR Kossuth (WWH), and 90 on 27 May at Kettleson Hogsback WA Dickinson (MHB). The first birds were observed 18 Mar at Saylorville Res Polk (DTh).

**Ring-billed Gull:** Only 8 reports, all but two were from Johnson with the first on 1 Mar along the Iowa R Johnson (MHB). The colony at Meinking M Dickinson was active with 130+ nests and small chicks on 30 May (SJD).

**Herring Gull:** First: 19 on 1 Mar along the Iowa R near Coralville Johnson (MHB). The peak of 40 on 2 Apr at Saylorville Res Polk (DTh) was much lower than the peak of 1,200 last year. Last: 1 on 30 May at Spirit Lake Landfill Dickinson (SJD).

**Thayer's Gull:** Only a single report: 1 on 30 Mar at Saylorville Res Polk (RLC).

**Lesser Black-backed Gull:** Seven reports from 4 counties, all of single birds, with the first on 9 Mar at Cedar L Linn (JF) and the last on 2 Apr at Saylorville Res Polk (DTh).

**Glaucous Gull:** All: 1 on 9 Mar at Cedar L Linn (JF) and 1 juv on 29 Mar at Red Rock Res Marion (SJD).

**Least Tern:** Two reports of presumably the same bird on 16 May at Marsh



*Black Tern*, Eagle L, Hancock, 22 May 2015.  
Photography by Tyler M. Harms, Ames, IA.



*Forster's Tern*, Hawkeye WA, Johnson, 21 May 2015. Photograph by Linda Rudolph, Coralville, IA.

Farm Wetland Dallas (JB, JG). Surprisingly, no reports from the MidAmerican Energy Ponds Pottawattamie, a regular location for this species.

**Caspian Tern:** A record early bird was observed 11 Apr at Cedar L Linn (JF). Most: 63 on 23 May at Saylorville Res Polk (JG). Last: 1 on 30 May at Kettleson Hogsback WA Dickinson (LAS).

**Black Tern:** First: 1 on 6 May at Cardinal M Winneshiek (LZL). Most: 1,400 on 22 May at Trumbull L Clay (SJD). Last: 35 on 26 May at Grovers L Dickinson (MHB).

**Common Tern:** Nine reports from 7 counties with the first on 4 May at Saylorville Res Polk (JMC) and the last on 24 May in Alden Hardin (MP). A flock of 102 on 13 May at Deere Dike Dubuque (DAS) was one of the largest inland flocks reported in recent years.

**Forster's Tern:** Migration peaked slightly later this year with 15 on 23 May at Iowa L Emmet (PH). The first bird was observed on 8 Apr at Hurstville Nature Area Jackson (BR) and the last 6 on 27 May at Kettleson Hogsback WA Dickinson (MHB).

**Eurasian Collared-Dove:** Only reported in 3 counties this year: 4 on 11 Apr in Mt. Ayr Ringgold (WWH), 1 on 11 May in Hancock (CJF), and 2 on 15 May at Errington M Polk (RLC).

**White-winged Dove:** A single bird was reported 27 Mar-2 Apr and again 24-28 Apr in Shenandoah Page (KDy), a regular location for this species. No other reports.

**Yellow-billed Cuckoo:** First reports of this species were considerably early this year. A single bird observed on 4 May at Lacey Keosauqua SP Van Buren (CRE) is the third earliest record and a single bird on 5 May at Diamond L Poweshiek (MP) ties the previous third earliest record.

**Black-billed Cuckoo:** Six reports mostly from central and southern Iowa with the northernmost report on 23 May at Eagle L Hancock (AMJ). The first bird was observed on 4 May at Lacey Keosauqua SP Van Buren (CRE).

**Barn Owl:** A single bird was observed on a farm in Story from 17-31 May (Sheila Doser fide SJD).



*Ruby-throated Hummingbird on nest, Ledges SP, Boone, 20 May 2015. Photograph by Doug Harr, Ogden, IA.*

**Eastern Screech-Owl:** All: 1 on 1 Mar at Waubonsie SP *Fremont* (KDy), 1 on 10 Apr in a nest box in Albion *Marshall* (MP), 1 on 2 May at Red Feather Prairie *Polk* (KDy), and 1 on 15 May at Lacey Keosauqua SP *Van Buren* (KVS).

**Great Horned Owl:** Reported in 6 counties with the first on 11 Mar in *Jones* (BR).

**Snowy Owl:** As many as 4 were reported from 1-14 Mar near Hayden Prairie *Howard* (LR, RGo). Five reports away from this location: 1 ad female on 1 Mar in *Humboldt* (SJD), 1 ad male on 1 Mar in *Wright* (SJD-ph), 1 on 8 Mar in *Hancock* (Patty Hansen fide PH), 1 juv male on 9 Mar in *Wright* (Tim Smith fide SJD), and 1 on 14 Mar in *O'Brien* (A.J. Christian fide TMH).

**BURROWING OWL:** A single bird was seen 25 Apr outside Arthur in *Ida* (Don Poggensee-ph).

**Long-eared Owl:** All: 2 on 17 Mar in *Decatur* (DTh), 1 on 28 Mar at North Twin L *Calhoun* (KDy), 2 on 28 Mar at Shimon Marsh WA *Pocahontas* (KDy), and 1 on 11 Apr in Larry Ries' yard *Winneshie*k (LR).

**Short-eared Owl:** Only two reports: one on 18 Mar at Errington M *Polk* (JB) and 2 on 27 Mar at Neal Smith NWR *Jasper* (KVS).

**BOREAL OWL:** A specimen was collected and submitted on 11 Mar to the bird collection at Dordt College in Sioux City *Woodbury* (Robert De Haan fide PH).

**Northern Saw-whet Owl:** A single bird on 1 Mar at Grammer Grove WA *Marshall* (MP) was the only report.

**Common Nighthawk:** First: 1 on 5 May in *Grimes Polk* (JB). A report of 120 on 15 May at Cardinal M *Winneshie*k (PH, LR) was a high count for this species.

**Chuck-will's-widow:** No reports.

**Eastern Whip-poor-will:** All: 1 on 29 Apr at Red Feather Prairie *Polk* (DTh), 1 on 3 May at Sand Point, Hawkeye WA *Johnson* (BR), 1 on 26 May at Stone SP *Woodbury* (GLV), and 3 on 31 May at Loess Hills WA *Monona* (GLV).

**Chimney Swift:** The first bird was observed 19 Apr below Saylorville Res dam *Polk* (KVS), a few days earlier than last year.

**Ruby-throated Hummingbird:** Reports of 1-2 birds from 6 counties in May with the first on 1 May in Denny Thompson's yard *Polk* (DTh).

**Belted Kingfisher:** Seven reports from 5 counties with the first on 1 Mar in Lime Springs *Howard* (LR).

**Red-headed Woodpecker:** Reported in 7 counties with the high of 14 on 5 Apr at Bever P *Linn* (BR).

**Yellow-bellied Sapsucker:** Reports of 1-4 birds from 10 counties with the first on 1 Apr at Gray's Lake P *Polk* (JB).

**Northern Flicker:** A report of 18 on 10 Apr at Hawkeye WA *Johnson* (MHB) was the high for this spring.

**Pileated Woodpecker:** 1-4 birds reported in 11 counties with the first on 5



*Yellow-bellied Sapsucker at nest, Pilot Knob SP, Hancock, 22 May 2015. Photography by Tyler M. Harms, Ames, IA.*



*Blue Jay, Polk, 28 May 2015. Photograph by Richard S. Wacha, Des Moines, IA.*

Mar in Marshalltown *Marshall* (MP). A nesting female with young in a cavity on 23 Mar at Call SP *Kossuth* (MP, AMJ) was an exciting observation at the Spring Meeting.

**American Kestrel:** Only 4 reports: 1 on 14 Mar at Cone M *Louisa* (WWH), 1 on 10 Apr in *Linn* (BR), a nesting pair from 29 Apr-31 May near Sparks Cemetery *Boone* (LGD), and 1 on 23 May at Union Slough NWR *Kossuth* (WWH).

**Merlin:** All: 1 on 6 Mar at Owego Wetland Complex *Woodbury* (GLV), 1 on 17 Apr at Rapp P *Page* (KDy), and 1 on 15 May at Lake Meyer P *Winneshiek* (PH, LR).

**Peregrine Falcon:** Reported in 9 counties with the first on 30 Mar at Cardinal M *Winneshiek* (LR).

**Olive-sided Flycatcher:** Reported in 7 counties in May with the first on 15 May at Ledges SP *Boone* (DCH) and the last on 30 May in *Buchanan* (MP).

**Eastern Wood-Pewee:** Only 5 reports with the first on 4 May at Lacey Keosauqua SP *Van Buren* (CRE).

**Yellow-bellied Flycatcher:** Five reports from 4 counties with the first on 19 May at Hickory Hill P *Johnson* (CRE) and

the last on 26 May at Kettleson Hogsback WA *Dickinson* (MHB).

**Acadian Flycatcher:** First: 1 on 4 May at Lacey Keosauqua SP *Van Buren* (CRE). Last: 3 on 25 May along the Heart of Iowa Trail Story (MP). Reported in 4 additional counties.

**Alder Flycatcher:** The first migrant was seen on 17 May in Algona *Kossuth* (MCK) and the last on 28 May at Diamond L *Dickinson* (MHB).

**Willow Flycatcher:** Similar to Alder, the first migrants were seen on 16 May at Brenton Arboretum *Dallas* (JB) and the last on 31 May at Hawkeye WA *Johnson* (MHB). Reports of 5 on both 23 May at Union Slough NWR *Kossuth* (WWH) and 28 May at Diamond L *Dickinson* (MHB) were the high this spring.

**Least Flycatcher:** Slightly later than last year, the first migrant arrived 1 May in Beaverdale *Polk* (JMC) with the high count of 10 on 11 May along the Wapsi River Greenbelt *Bremer* (CRE). The last birds were observed 28 May at Diamond L *Dickinson* (MHB).

**Eastern Phoebe:** First on 24 Mar at Brenton Sl *Dallas* (RLC).

**Great Crested Flycatcher:** First: 2 on 27 Apr at the Croton Unit, Shimek SF Lee (CRE). Most and last: 5 on 12 May at Jester P Polk (RLC).

**Western Kingbird:** Only 5 reports, all from central and western Iowa with the first on 5 May at Brenton Arboretum Dallas (RLC).

**Eastern Kingbird:** First on 27 Apr at Lake Sugema Van Buren (CRE).

**Scissor-tailed Flycatcher:** No reports.

**Loggerhead Shrike:** The first 2 were seen 11 Apr at Kellerton BCA Ringgold on an Iowa Young Birders field trip (WWH). Reported in 5 additional counties with the last report on 30 May of a likely nesting pair at Cone M Louisa (BSc).

**Northern Shrike:** Reported in 5 counties with the first on 1 Mar in Spillville Winneshiek (LR) and the last on 4 Apr in Ringgold (MP).

**White-eyed Vireo:** The first bird arrived 16 Apr at the Croton Unit, Shimek SF Lee (RIA/PHA), a second earliest record of this species. Reported in 4 additional counties.

**Bell's Vireo:** Right on time, the first 5 birds were seen on 4 May at Lake Sugema Van Buren (CRE). This was also the high count for the spring. The last bird was observed on 31 May at Hawkeye WA Johnson (MHB).

**Yellow-throated Vireo:** First: 1 on 26 Apr at the Donnellson Unit, Shimek SF Lee (BSc). Last: 2 on 21 May at Ashworth P Polk (RLC).

**Blue-headed Vireo:** Only six reports with the first on 2 May at Hickory Hill P Johnson (CRE) and the last on 23 May at Call SP Kossuth (MP).

**Warbling Vireo:** First on 24 Apr at Water Works P Polk (JB).

**Philadelphia Vireo:** Reported in 4 counties with the first on 12 May at Water

Works P Polk (JB) and the last on 25 May in Dickinson (MHB).

**Red-eyed Vireo:** The first migrant arrived on 27 Apr at the Donnellson Unit, Shimek SF Lee (CRE), considerably earlier than last year.

**Horned Lark:** Only 4 reports: 250 on 5 Mar near Lime Springs Howard (LR), 3 on 14 Mar at Cone M Louisa (WWH), 1 on 11 Apr at Kellerton BCA Ringgold (WWH), and 1 on 29 Apr in Linn (BR).

**Purple Martin:** A single male arrived on 3 Apr in Johnson (BSc) for the first report of the spring. A nesting colony of 14 on 27 May at Kettleston Hogsback WA Dickinson (MHB) was the last report.

**Tree Swallow:** First: 4 on 15 Mar at Runnells WA Marion (JG). Most and last: 50 on 23 May at Union Slough NWR Kossuth (WWH).

**Northern Rough-winged Swallow:** Reported in 7 counties with the first on 9 Apr at Pictured Rocks P Jones (BR) and high of 150 on 19 May in Boone (DCH).

**Bank Swallow:** Six reports with the first on 20 Apr at Swan L, Hawkeye WA Johnson (BR) and the high of 500 on 19 May at Sycamore Access Polk (RLC).

**Cliff Swallow:** The first bird was observed on 8 Apr at Gray's Lake P Polk (JB-details), which ties the second earliest record for this species. Most: 198 on 14 May at Jester P Polk (RLC).

**Barn Swallow:** First: 1 on 5 Apr in Ottumwa Wapello (CRE). The high count of 200 came on both 19 May at Sycamore Access Polk (RLC) and on 23 May at Union Slough NWR Kossuth (WWH), the latter being the last report of the spring.

**Tufted Titmouse:** All: 20 on 10 Mar at Faulkes Heritage Woods Linn (WWH) and 13 on 5 Apr at Bever P Linn (BR).

**Red-breasted Nuthatch:** All: 1 on 11 Mar at Lake Meyer P Winneshiek (LR), 1 on



*Wood Duck, Swan Lake P, Carroll, 22 April 2015. Photograph by Larry Dau, Boone, IA.*



*Swainson's Hawk, Sioux, 22 April 2015. Photograph by Joe Jungers, Hospers, IA.*



*Virginia Rail, Harrier M, Boone, 22 May 2015. Photograph by John Bissell, Grimes, IA.*



*Hermit Thrush, Johnson, 19 April 2015. Photograph by Linda Rudolph, Coralville, IA.*



*Common Yellowthroat, Iowa City, Johnson, 15 May 2015. Photograph by Jim Scheib, Iowa City, IA.*



*Yellow Warbler, Saylorville Res, Polk, 19 April 2015. Photograph by Stephen J. Dinsmore, Ames, IA.*



*Dickcissel, Boone, 20 May 2015. Photograph by Larry Dau, Boone, IA.*



*Orchard Oriole, Iowa City, Johnson, 27 May 2015. Photograph by Jim Scheib, Iowa City, IA.*



*Baltimore Oriole, Polk, 25 May 2015. Photograph by Richard S. Wacha, Des Moines, IA.*



*Northern Waterthrush, Sioux, 24 April 2015.  
Photograph by Joe Jungers, Hospers, IA.*

13 Apr at Green Castle RA Marshall (CRE), 1 on 18 Apr at Bois Bend WA Buchanan (CRE), and 1 on 27 Apr at the Farmington Unit, Shimek SF Van Buren (CRE).

**White-breasted Nuthatch:** All: 3 on 26 Mar in Washington (WWH), 2 on 3 Apr in Grinnell Poweshiek (WWH), and 11 on 5 Apr at Bever P Linn (BR).

**Brown Creeper:** Reported in 8 counties in central and eastern Iowa with the last on 29 Apr below Saylorville Res dam Polk (DTh).

**House Wren:** First: 1 on 16 Apr at Indian Creek Nature Center Linn (WWH). Most: 20 on 7 May at Indian Creek Nature Center Linn (WWH).

**Winter Wren:** Reported in 7 counties with the last on 20 Apr along the Wapsie River Greenbelt Bremer (CRE).

**Sedge Wren:** The first migrants arrived on 2 May at Errington M Polk (KDY).

**Marsh Wren:** Slightly earlier than last year, the first migrant was seen on 23 Apr at Union Grove SP Tama (MP). A count of 15 on 9 May at Harrier M Boone (DCH) was the high for this spring.

**Carolina Wren:** Only 3 reports: 2 on 1 Mar in Johnston Polk (DTh), 1 on 5 Mar at



*Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Saylorville Res, Polk, 8 May 2015. Photograph by Stephen J. Dinsmore, Ames, IA.*

Water Works P Polk (JB), and 1 on 30 Apr at Indian Creek Nature Center Linn (BR).

**Bewick's Wren:** Only 2 reports from the Argyle Junkyard Lee, a regular location for this species: 1 on 16 Apr (RIA/PHA) and 1 on 26 Apr (BSc). No reports away from this location.

**Blue-gray Gnatcatcher:** First: 3 on 15 Apr at Walnut Woods SP Polk (JG).

**Golden-crowned Kinglet:** First: 1 on 23 Mar at Water Works P Polk (JB). Last: 1 on 29 Apr at Ledges SP Boone (DTh).

**Ruby-crowned Kinglet:** The first report was on 2 Apr below Saylorville Res dam Polk (DTh). The last report on 28 May at Diamond L Dickinson (MHB-ph) ties the second latest record for this species.

**Eastern Bluebird:** The first report of 9 on 5 Mar at Water Works P Polk (JB) was also the high count from this spring.



**Townsend's Solitaire:** No reports.

**Veery:** Only 4 reports: 1 on 6 May at Parker's Woods *Cerro Gordo* (BVL), 1 on 9 May at Yellow River SF *Allamakee* (MP), 1 on 10 May at Beam Woods *Jones* (CRE), and 2 on 23 May in *Grimes Polk* (JB).

**Gray-cheeked Thrush:** Reported in 7 counties east of a line from *Kossuth* down to *Polk* with the first on 3 May at Parker's Woods *Cerro Gordo* (RGo) and the last on 25 May in *Alcona Kossuth* (MCK).

**Swainson's Thrush:** First: 6 on 4 May at Jester P *Polk* (JMC). Most: 108 nocturnal migrants on 23 May in *Grimes Polk* (JB). Last: 25 nocturnal migrants on 25 May in *Alcona Kossuth* (MCK).

**Hermit Thrush:** Similar to Gray-cheeked, reported in 6 counties east of a line from *Kossuth* to *Polk* with the first on 7 Mar at Indian Creek Nature Center *Linn* (WWH) and the last on 2 May at Grammer Grove WA *Marshall* (MP).

**Wood Thrush:** First on 27 Apr at the Donnellson Unit, Shimek SF *Lee* (CRE) and high count of 12 on 15 May at Lacey Keosauqua SP *Van Buren* (KVS).

**American Robin:** Peak of 300 on 26 Mar in *Washington* (WWH).

**Varied Thrush:** A single bird overwintered and continued to be seen from 1-5 Mar in Lime Springs *Howard* (PH, LR).

**Gray Catbird:** First: 2 on 18 Apr in *Linn* (BR) ties the third earliest record. Most: 25 on 9 May at West of Hills *Johnson* (WWH).

**Brown Thrasher:** First on 18 Mar in *Jackson* (BR).

**Northern Mockingbird:** Reported in 7 counties with the first on 17 Mar in *Decatur* (DTh). A single bird on 25 Apr in *Cerro Gordo* was the northernmost report (RGo, CJF, BVL).

**American Pipit:** Seven reports from 7 counties with the first on 20 Mar at Union

Hills WPA *Cerro Gordo* (BVL) and high of 6 on 3 May at Badger L *Monona* (GLV). The last two birds seen 22 May at the Ingham-High WA *Emmet* (SJD-ph) is the third latest report.

**Cedar Waxwing:** A report of 60 on 24 Mar at Saylorville Res *Polk* was the most this spring.

**Lapland Longspur:** Reports of 1150 on 23 Mar in *Dickinson* (ET) and 1,000 on 7 Mar in *Webster* (DCH) and at Neal Smith NWR *Jasper* (KVS) were the high counts this spring. Last: 250 on 18 Apr in *Mitchell* (PH).

**Smith's Longspur:** Reported in 5 counties with the first on 18 Mar at Errington M *Polk* (DTh), high of 300 from 12-26 Apr at Dunbar SI *Greene* (SJD), and last on 16 Apr at Neal Smith NWR *Jasper* (KVS).

**Snow Bunting:** Reports of 150 to 1,000 from 5-14 Mar near Lime Springs *Howard* (LR).

**Ovenbird:** First: 2 on 27 Apr at the Croton Unit, Shimek SF *Lee* (CRE).

**Worm-eating Warbler:** First on 27 Apr at the Croton Unit, Shimek SF *Lee* (CRE). Two reports away from *Lee*: 1 on 3 May in *Urbandale Polk* (BE) and 1 on 5 May at Walnut Woods SP *Polk* (JG). Last: 1 on 18 May at Croton Unit, Shimek SF *Lee* (BSc).

**Louisiana Waterthrush:** First on 5 Apr at Slip Bluff P *Decatur* (KDy) with the northernmost reports on 9 May at Yellow River SF *Allamakee* (MP) and on 19 May at Pilot Knob SP *Hancock* (BVL).

**Northern Waterthrush:** First: 2 on 26 Apr at Port Louisa NWR *Louisa* (MHB). Most: 7 on 4 May at Banner Flats WA *Warren* (JMC).

**Golden-winged Warbler:** Reported in 11 counties with the first on 2 May in Mason City *Cerro Gordo* (BVL) and last on 22 May at Lime Creek Nature Center *Cerro Gordo* (BVL).



*Prothonotary Warbler, Hawkeye WA, Johnson, 31 May 2015. Photograph by Jim Scheib, Iowa City, IA.*



*Golden-winged Warbler, Saylorville Res, Polk, 8 May 2015. Photograph by Stephen J. Dinsmore, Ames, IA.*

**Blue-winged Warbler:** Fewer reports than Golden-winged with the first on 26 Apr at the Croton Unit, Shimek SF Lee (BSc) and last on 16 May at the Croton Unit, Shimek SF Lee (KVS).

**Black-and-white Warbler:** First on 26 Apr at the Donnellson Unit, Shimek SF Lee (BSc) and last on 28 May at Cairo Woods WA Louisa (JF).

**Prothonotary Warbler:** Reported in 6 counties north of Keokuk with the first on 3 May at Brenton SI Dallas (JB).

**Tennessee Warbler:** Migration began on schedule for this species with the first on 2 May at Hawkeye WA Johnson (CRE), peak of 35 on 11 May along the Wapsie River Greenbelt Bremer (CRE), and last on 27 May at Lime Creek Nature Center Cerro Gordo (BVL).

**Orange-crowned Warbler:** First: 1 on 23 Apr at Polk City WA Polk (JB). Most: Only 4 on 14 May in Humboldt Humboldt (AB). Last: 2 on 22 May at Lime Creek Nature Center Cerro Gordo (BVL).

**Nashville Warbler:** First on 28 Apr at

Hickory Hill P Johnson (CRE), peak of 20 on 4 May at Lacey Keosauqua SP Van Buren (CRE), and last on 27 May in Algona Kosuth (MCK).

**Connecticut Warbler:** Reported in 7 counties in May with the first on 16 May at Grammer Grove WA Marshall (MP) and last on 23 May at Matsell Bridge WA Linn (JF). A single bird on 21 May in Cerro Gordo was the northernmost report (RGo, BVL), and an exciting bird for the observers.

**Mourning Warbler:** Similar to Connecticut, reported in 10 counties in May with the first on 11 May along the Wapsie River Greenbelt Bremer (CRE) and last on 30 May at Lime Creek Nature Center Cerro Gordo (BVL).

**Kentucky Warbler:** Six reports mostly from southeastern Iowa with the first on 26 Apr at the Donnellson Unit, Shimek SF Lee (BSc). The last report and the only one away from southeastern Iowa was on 30 May at Amana Woods Iowa (JF).

**Common Yellowthroat:** First: 1 on 27 Apr at the Croton Unit, Shimek SF Lee (CRE).



*Palm Warbler, Saylorville Res, Polk, 8 May 2015. Photograph by Stephen J. Dinsmore, Ames, IA.*

**Hooded Warbler:** One on 18 May at the Donnellson Unit, Shimek SF Lee (CRE) was the only report.

**American Redstart:** First on 2 May at Hawkeye WA Johnson (CRE) with the high count of 35 on 11 May along the Wapsie River Greenbelt Bremer (CRE).

**Cape May Warbler:** Reports of 1-2 birds from 6 counties with the first on 9 May at Ledges SP Boone (DCH) and last on 22 May at Sunken Grove WA Pocahontas (SJD).

**Cerulean Warbler:** All: 2 on 4 May at Lacey Keosauqua SP Van Buren (CRE), 2 on 8 May along the Squire Point Trail, Coralville Res Johnson (MHB), 8 on 9 May at Yellow River SF Allamakee (MP), 3 on 9 May at Ledges SP Boone (DCH), and 2 on 15 May along the Squire Point Trail, Coralville Res Johnson (MHB).

**Northern Parula:** The first migrant arrived on 13 Apr at Saylorville Res Polk (RLC). Reports of 9 on 28 Apr at the Croton Unit, Shimek SF Lee (RLC) and on 4 May at Lacey Keosauqua SP Van Buren (CRE) were

the high counts this spring. The last bird was observed on 30 May in Clay (LAS).

**Magnolia Warbler:** First migrants arrived on 8 May at Hickory Hill P Johnson (MHB) and the last bird vacated Iowa on 26 May from Grimes Polk (JB).

**Bay-breasted Warbler:** Reported in only 5 counties, far fewer than the 10 counties last spring, with the first on 9 May at Trumbull L Clay (LAS) and last on 23 May at Goose L Kossuth (PH).

**Blackburnian Warbler:** Reports of 1-3 birds in 10 counties with the first on 4 May at Lacey Keosauqua SP Van Buren (CRE) and last on 24 May at Spring Run Wetland Complex Dickinson (MHB).

**Yellow Warbler:** A single bird on 19 Apr at Saylorville Res Polk (SJD-ph) is the earliest record for this species. The previous early record was 20 Apr. The last report of 15 on 28 May at Diamond L Dickinson (MHB) was also the high count for this spring.

**Chestnut-sided Warbler:** First: 1 on 4 May at Water Works P Polk (JB). Most: 12 on 11 May along the Wapsie River Greenbelt Bremer (CRE). Last: 1 on 25 May in Dickinson (MHB).

**Blackpoll Warbler:** This long distance migrant first arrived in Iowa on 2 May at Grammer Grove WA Marshall (MP). Reported in 5 additional counties with the last on 24 May at Iowa L Emmet (MP).

**Black-throated Blue Warbler:** Only two reports: a male on 11 May at Buffalo Creek Access Buchanan (MP) and a female on 16 May at Parker's Woods Cerro Gordo (BVL).

**Palm Warbler:** One on 18 Apr in Linn (BR) ties the second earliest record for this species. A peak of 34 was reported on 11 May at Sweet M Bremer (CRE). The last 2 birds were observed on 22 May at Lime Creek Nature Center Cerro Gordo (BVL).

**Pine Warbler:** Reported in 4 counties with the first 2 on 26 Apr at Beam Woods *Jones* (CRE). The last report of 4 on 18 May at the Farmington Unit, Shimek SF *Lee* (CRE) was also the high count for this spring. A single bird reported on 3 May at Parker's Woods *Cerro Gordo* (RGo, BVL) was the northernmost record for this species this spring.

**Yellow-rumped Warbler:** First: 1 on 5 Apr at Wickiup Hill Learning Center *Linn* (WWH). Most: 150 on 3 May in *Guthrie* (K Dy). Last: 1 on 15 May at Lake Meyer P *Winneshiek* (PH).

**Yellow-throated Warbler:** Reported in 6 counties east of *Polk* with the first on 11 Apr in *Linn* (BR), peak of 6 on 4 May at Lacey Keosauqua SP *Van Buren* (CRE), and last on 31 May at Walnut Woods SP *Polk* (AMJ).

**Black-throated Green Warbler:** First migrants arrived on 2 May on both sides of the state, 1 at Bacon Creek P *Woodbury* (GLV) and 1 at Hickory Hill P *Johnson* (CRE). A report of 5 on 11 May along the Wapsie River Greenbelt *Bremer* (CRE) was the high count this spring. The last bird was observed on 22 May at Hickory Hill P *Johnson* (CRE).

**Canada Warbler:** The first was observed on 8 May at Haysville Bend WA *Keokuk* (CRE) ties the second earliest record. Last: 1 on 25 May at Lime Creek Nature Center *Cerro Gordo* (BVL).

**Wilson's Warbler:** Reports of 1-3 birds in 5 counties with the first on 4 May at Union Grove SP *Tama* (MP) and the last on 28 May at Diamond L *Dickinson* (MHB).

**Yellow-breasted Chat:** Five reports of 1-4 birds all in southeastern Iowa with the first on 4 May at Lake Sugema *Van Buren* (CRE) and last on 18 May at the Lick Creek Unit, Shimek SF *Lee* (CRE).

**Spotted Towhee:** Two reports at Ba-



*Clay-colored Sparrow*, Sioux, 10 May 2015.  
Photograph by Joe Jungers, Hospers, IA.

con Creek P *Woodbury*: 1 on 19 Apr (MHB) and 1 on 16 May (GLV).

**Eastern Towhee:** First: 2 on 2 Apr at Indian Creek Nature Center *Linn* (WWH). Most and last: 10 on 9 May in *Washington* (WWH).

**American Tree Sparrow:** The last birds departed on 11 Apr from Cardinal M *Winneshiek* (LR), 2 weeks earlier than last year.

**Chipping Sparrow:** First: 4 on 2 Apr in Anamosa *Jones* (BR). Most: 18 on 24 Apr below Saylorville Res dam *Polk* (RLC).

**Clay-colored Sparrow:** Reported in 13 counties with the first on 17 Apr at Rapp P *Page* (K Dy). The last report of 7 birds on 28 May at Diamond L *Dickinson* (MHB) was the high for this spring and indicates possible nesting at this location.

**Field Sparrow:** First: 2 on 2 Apr in Anamosa *Jones* (BR). Most: 10 on 17 Apr at Ciha Fen Preserve *Johnson* (MHB).

**Vesper Sparrow:** Reported in 6 coun-

ties with the first on 23 Mar at Sedan Bottoms *Appanoose* (TNJ).

**Lark Sparrow:** First migrant arrived on 17 Apr at Ciha Fen Preserve *Johnson* (MHB), nearly a week later than last year. Reported in 8 additional counties with the peak of 6 on 14 May at Hawkeye WA *Johnson* (MHB) and the last on 29 May in *Worth* (CJF).

**Savannah Sparrow:** First: 5 on 26 Mar in *Washington* (WWH). Most: 33 on 23 Apr at *Errington M Polk* (RLC).

**Grasshopper Sparrow:** Reported in 8 counties with the first on 27 Apr in *Van Buren* (CRE).

**Henslow's Sparrow:** Reports were more numerous than for Grasshopper Sparrow with the first on 16 Apr at Neal Smith NWR *Jasper* (KVS) and peak of 20 on 4 May at Neal Smith NWR *Jasper* (KVS).

**Le Conte's Sparrow:** Two reports of 1-2 birds on 23 May at *Eagle L Kossuth* (PH, CJF).

**Nelson's Sparrow:** The 3 birds on 23 May at Sedan Bottoms *Appanoose* (TNJ) was the only report for this spring.

**Fox Sparrow:** The first report of 30 birds on 23 Mar at Water Works P *Polk* (JB) was the high for this spring. The last bird was observed on 9 Apr at *Errington M Polk* (RLC).

**Song Sparrow:** First: 1 on 1 Mar along the Iowa R in *Coralville Johnson* (MHB). Most: 54 on 9 Apr at *Errington M Polk* (RLC).

**Lincoln's Sparrow:** Migration began on 8 Apr in *Shenandoah Page* (KDy) and peaked with 8 birds on 11 May at Sweet M *Bremer* (CRE). The last birds were seen on 15 May at *Coon Creek WA Winneshiek* (PH).

**Swamp Sparrow:** First on 27 March and peak of 34 on 9 Apr, both at *Errington M Polk* (RLC).

**White-throated Sparrow:** A high count of 40 was seen on 24 Apr below Saylorville Res dam *Polk* (RLC) and on 11 May at Sweet M *Bremer* (CRE). The last bird was seen on 12 May at *Jester P Polk* (RLC).

**Harris's Sparrow:** Reported in 8 counties with the first on 4 Apr at *Squaw Creek P Linn* (BSc) and last on 24 May at *Spring Run Wetland Complex Dickinson* (MHB).

**White-crowned Sparrow:** Similar to Harris's Sparrow, first migrants arrived on 4 Apr at *Lake Macbride SP Johnson* (MHB). A late migrant was seen on 25 May at *Squaw Creek P Linn* (BSc).

**Dark-eyed Junco:** The last overwintering bird departed on 22 Apr from *Adel Dallas* (RLC), nearly 2 weeks earlier than last year. A report of 200 on 23 Mar at *Water Works P Polk* (JB) was the high.

**Summer Tanager:** Reports of 1-2 birds in 7 counties with the first on 28 Apr at the *Croton Unit, Shimek SF Lee* (RLC).

**Scarlet Tanager:** First on 26 Apr at the *Argyle Junkyard Lee* (BSc).

**WESTERN TANAGER:** A male visited Ed Thelen's yard *Dickinson* again this year on 21 May (\*ET-ph).

**Rose-breasted Grosbeak:** A single male on 18 Apr in *Mystic Appanoose* (TNJ) was the second earliest record for this species.

**Blue Grosbeak:** A possible nesting pair reported 12 May near *Tyrone WA Monroe* (JN) was the first report this spring. Reported in 3 additional counties in May.

**LAZULI BUNTING:** All: 1 on 25 Apr near *Glenwood Mills (\*JA-ph)* and 1 on 15 May near *Carroll Carroll (\*WT-ph)*.

**Indigo Bunting:** First was on 4 May at *Lacey Keosauqua SP Van Buren* (CRE).

**Dickcissel:** First bird arrived on 3 May at *Marsh Farm Wetland Dallas* (JB), nearly a week later than last year. A report of 20 on 4 May at *Neal Smith NWR Jasper* (KVS) was the high count.

**Bobolink:** First: 1 on 25 Apr at Baldwin M Jackson (BR). Most: 65 on 11 May at Neal Smith NWR Jasper (KVS).

**Eastern Meadowlark:** Reported mostly east of Dallas with the first on 16 Mar at Brenton Arboretum Dallas (JB). Reports west of Dallas include 1 on 18 Apr at Bacon Creek P Woodbury (GLV), 1 on 25 Apr at Owego Wetland Complex Woodbury (BFH), and 1 on 9 May at the Prairie Heritage Center O'Brien (LAS).

**Western Meadowlark:** First on 12 Mar in Marshall (MP). Easternmost reports include 3 from Johnson: 1 on 23 Mar at Goose L (MHB), 1 on 8 May at Hawkeye WA (MHB), and 1 on 9 May at Sycamore Bottoms (MHB).

**Yellow-headed Blackbird:** Reported in 12 counties with the first on 9 Apr at Water Works P Polk (JB). A report of 70 on 25 Apr at Riverton WA Fremont (KDy) was the high.

**Rusty Blackbird:** First 2 migrants on 7 Mar at Waterman Prairie O'Brien (DCH) with high counts of 220 on 27 Mar at Errington M Polk (RLC) and 200 on 21 Mar at Banner Flats Warren (JG). Last on 27 Apr at Fox River WA Van Buren (CRE).

**Brewer's Blackbird:** Reported in 6 counties with the first on 18 Mar at Errington M Polk (DTh), high counts of 35 on 19 Mar in Marengo Iowa (DCH) and 30 on 21 Mar at Banner Flats Warren (JG), and last on 24 Apr at Colo Ponds Story (MP).

**Great-tailed Grackle:** A report of 9 on 12 Apr at Dan Green Sl Clay (LAS) was the first and most reported this spring. Confirmed nest building was reported on 30 May at a small wetland in Ringgold (JN).

**Brown-headed Cowbird:** First: 14 on 18 Mar at Errington M Polk (RLC). Most: 60 on 27 Mar at Neal Smith NWR Jasper (KVS).

**Orchard Oriole:** First on 2 May at Brenton Arboretum Dallas (JB).

**Baltimore Oriole:** First on 27 Apr in Hampton Franklin (DCH).

**Purple Finch:** Reported in 6 counties with the last on 2 May in Paul Hertzels yard Cerro Gordo (PH).

**Red Crossbill:** A single Type 2 bird was heard on 17 Apr in Boone (SJD).

**Common Redpoll:** A flock of 40-75 birds was reported 1-7 Mar near Lime Springs Howard (LR, RGo).

**Pine Siskin:** Nineteen reports, far more than the 4 reports last year, with a high of 15 on 1 Apr in Jim Fuller's yard Johnson (JLF), and the last on 23 May in Algona Kossuth (MCK).

**American Goldfinch:** Only 5 reports with the high count of 30 on 7 May at Indian Creek Nature Center Linn (WWH).

**Eurasian Tree Sparrow:** Reported in only 3 counties east of Linn and Johnson with the high count of 18 on 5 Apr at Hawkeye WA Johnson (MHB).

## COMMENT

As always, many thanks to those of you who contributed your sightings this year. A special thanks to those 15 new or returning reporters for the spring season. Lastly, I'd like to recognize those individuals who entered more than 100 reports this spring: Mark Brown (473), Ray Cummins (262), Walt Wagner-Hecht (261), Chris Edwards (200), Mark Proescholdt (198), John Bissell (192), and Billy Reiter-Marolf (163). It's not a trivial task to enter field reports as we all know, and I very much appreciate the significant effort from these folks.

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## CONTRIBUTORS

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Ann Johnson	AMJ	Norwalk			

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# Report of the Records Committee for 2014

*Ann M. Johnson*

No new species were added to the state list in 2014 but Horned Grebe was confirmed as a breeding species [Dinsmore 2014a] and Fish Crow physical evidence was upgraded from documentation to photo and recording [Dinsmore 2014b]. A total of 59 records, all observations from the current year, were reviewed. Other documentations were reviewed by the seasonal field reports editors for supporting evidence of reported observations. The committee thanks everyone for timely submission of reports so that our publications offer the most current information available. Appreciation is also extended to all who enter their reports on-line. This is creating an extensive database of rarity reports that should be helpful to researchers.

Committee members for 2014 with years in which their terms expire were: Chris Edwards (2014), Aaron Brees (2015), Matthew Keene (2016), Jay Gilliam (2017), Paul Hertzell (2018), Bill Scheible (2019), and Ann Johnson (secretary, appointed by the committee). Karen Viste-Sparkman was nominated by the committee and subsequently appointed by the Board of Directors to fill a regular term beginning in 2015 to replace Chris Edwards whose term expired at the end of the year. After 14 years as secretary, Johnson resigned from the position and Paul Hertzell was appointed by the committee to assume those responsibilities. Johnson was subsequently appointed to complete Hertzell's regular term through 2018.

Status changes to the Iowa checklist are based on the number of reports during the previous ten years. The following status changes were approved by the committee at the annual meeting on 16 November 2014:

**From Regular to Accidental** – Greater Prairie-Chicken. Perhaps prematurely, in 2001 the committee changed the status of this species from accidental to regular based on what was felt to be an established reintroduction in what is now known as the Kellerton Grasslands in Ringgold County. In recent years, however, it has become obvious that the viability of this population has become dependent upon the infusion of captive birds. Observations away from Kellerton may still occur but should be considered accidental.

**From Regular to Casual** – Red Knot. This is a bird whose numbers are threatened globally so it is not a surprise that there are fewer reports mid-continent.

**From Casual to Regular** – Black-legged Kittiwake, Neotropic Cormorant, and Bohemian Waxwing. All of these species fall on the cusp between regular and casual and should be reported with details.

**From Accidental to Casual** – Rufous Hummingbird and Rock Wren. Long suspected to be regular each fall, the growing collection of photos of spread tail feathers of a Rufous Hummingbird is adding evidence to help support that hypothesis.

Each record reviewed by the Records Committee is assigned a six-digit number (year and sequence number) which is included in this report for future reference. Records are classified as follows: A = Accepted (-S = specimen, -P = photograph, -R = recording, -D =



documentation) and NA = Not Accepted. In order to be accepted, a record must receive 7 votes on the initial review or 6 votes on a subsequent review. The subcategories A-S, A-P, and A-R indicate that physical evidence supports the identification, and records are sub-classified based on a majority vote. References to IBL are the page of the Field Reports or a special note in *Iowa Bird Life* where the record is cited. Published notes and previous citations may contain more details. An \* indicates a previously uncited documentation.

In the past, a separate photo file was maintained by the Records Committee. With the proliferation of digital images being submitted, as well as documentations having unique identification numbers, these photos are now being archived as a part of the documentation and are not assigned a separate number. The classification in the entries below will indicate the presence of an identifiable photo with the record.

Significant records are unfortunately missed each year, particularly those at the edges of established dates that would solidify our knowledge of Iowa birds. We encourage all Iowa birders to be familiar with review list species and extraordinary early and late dates. These lists are easily accessible on our website. Good photos should at least have some minimal details entered to identify who, what, when and where. Oftentimes a snapshot or recording picked up on a smartphone may provide just enough corroboration for acceptance. Written documentations are more difficult to evaluate and, as a lower level of evidence, require more detail and logic to be accepted for use by future researchers. The committee relies on the observer to paint a picture with words of what was seen and how it was identified, hopefully written from notes taken at the time of observation. This detail is seldom available from listserv posts or brief comments submitted with seasonal field reports. A few notes on size and structure, along with a description of what was seen and consideration of any similar species, can make all the difference between an accepted and not accepted report. The committee can only evaluate the evidence that is submitted. **The committee's purpose is not to pass judgment on the validity of a particular sighting or the birding skills of a reporter but rather on the evidence provided.**

#### 2014 RECORDS ACCEPTED

**Black-bellied Whistling-Duck:** 10 May at Spencer in *Clay* (2014-27, A-P, IBL 84:102), 2 Jun at Crow Creek WA in *Scott* (2014-36, A-P, IBL 84:151), and 3 Jul at Green Island WA in *Jackson* (2014-30, A-P, IBL 84:151).

**Mottled Duck:** 14 May at Dunbar Slough in *Greene* (2014-24, A-P, IBL 84:103).

**Harlequin Duck:** 31 Dec 2014-12 Jan 2015 at Des Moines in *Polk* (2014-62, A-P, IBL 85:45).

**Roseate Spoonbill:** 30 Jul-5 Aug at Frazer's Bend in *Fremont* (2014-33, A-P, IBL 84:154, 85:11 [Dinsmore and Lundy 2014]).

**Swallow-tailed Kite:** 31 Aug near Stuart in *Guthrie* (2014-42, A-D, IBL 85:11).

**Ferruginous Hawk:** 4 Nov at Hitchcock NA in *Pottawattamie* (2014-49, A-D, IBL 85:12).

**King Rail:** 31 May-3 Jun at Big Wall L. in *Wright* (2014-35, A-P, IBL 84:107) and 13 Jul at Hawkeye WA in *Johnson* (2014-31, A-D, IBL 84:155).

**Ruff:** 12 Apr at Coralville Res. in *Johnson* (2014-07, A-P, IBL 84:108) and 26 Jul near Rush L. in *Palo Alto* (2014-32, A-D, IBL 84:156).

**Red Phalarope:** 29-30 Aug at Saylorville Res. in *Polk* (2014-41, A-P, IBL 85:15).

**Parasitic Jaeger:** 1 Nov at Saylorville Res. in *Polk* (2014-56, A-D, IBL 85:15).

**Long-tailed Jaeger:** 31 Aug-1 Sep at Red Rock Res. in *Marion* (2014-43, A-P, IBL 85:15) and 5-9 Oct at Red Rock Res. in *Marion* (2014-46, A-D, IBL 85:15).

**Black-legged Kittiwake:** 12 Apr at Gray's L. in *Polk* (2014-08, A-P, IBL 84:110) and 16-18 May at Red Rock Res. in *Marion* (2014-16, A-P, IBL 84:110, 120[photo]).

**Little Gull:** 9 Aug at Deere Dike in *Dubuque* (2014-40, A-P, IBL 85:16), 7 Sep at Pat and Jack Scenic Overlook in *Scott* (2014-45, A-D, IBL 85:16), and 17-18 Oct at L. Macbride in *Johnson* (2014-48, A-P, IBL 85:16).

**California Gull:** 2 May at Sandy Beach in *Johnson* (2014-11, A-P, IBL 84:110) and 6 Dec at Saylorville Res. in *Polk* (2014-58, A-D, IBL 85:48).

**Iceland Gull:** 23-28 Mar at Coralville Res. in *Johnson* (2014-19, A-P, IBL 84:110).

**Great Black-backed Gull:** 17-27 Feb at Coralville Res. in *Johnson* (2014-02, A-D, IBL 84:69), 16 Feb-5 Mar at Cedar L. in *Linn* (2014-28, A-P, IBL 84:111), and 7 Apr at Coralville Res. in *Johnson* (2014-29, A-P, IBL 84:111).

**Burrowing Owl:** 1 May at Middletown in *Des Moines* (2014-34, A-P, IBL 84:111).

**Rufous Hummingbird:** 5 Sep at Homestead in *Iowa* (2014-44, A-P, IBL 85:21).

**Gyr Falcon:** 1 Jan near Joice in *Worth* (2014-01, A-D, IBL 84:71), 11 Nov at Hitchcock NA in *Pottawattamie* (2014-51, A-D, IBL 85:21), and 16 Nov near Sutherland in *O'Brien* (2014-52, A-D, IBL 85:21).

**Say's Phoebe:** 15 Apr at Greenbelt L. in *Black Hawk* (2014-10, A-P, IBL 84:113) and 12 Dec at Stony Hollow Rd. in *Des Moines* (2014-54, A-D, IBL 85:51).

**Fish Crow:** 20 May at Saylorville Res.

in *Polk* (2014-25, A-P, IBL 84:114 [Dinsmore 2014b]).

**Common Raven:** 8-25 Nov at Saylorville Res. in *Polk* (2014-50, A-P, IBL 85:23 [Harms 2015]).

**Mountain Bluebird:** 21 Mar in *Louisa* (2014-04, A-D, IBL 84:115).

**Sprague's Pipit:** 11 Oct at Dunbar Slough in *Greene* (2014-47, A-D, IBL 85:24).

**Lark Bunting:** 4 Jun at Lansing in *Allamakee* (2014-21, A-P, IBL 84:163).

**Western Tanager:** 24 Apr near Forest City in *Winnebago* (2014-09, A-P, IBL 84:124) and 2 May at Spirit L. in *Dickinson* (2014-22, A-P, IBL 84:124).

**Black-headed Grosbeak:** 9-10 May at Spencer in *Clay* (2014-14, A-P, IBL 84:124).

**Lazuli Bunting:** 18 May at Little Sioux Greenbelt in *Cherokee* (2014-23, A-P, IBL 84:125), 21-23 May at Spirit L. in *Dickinson* (2014-17, A-P, IBL 84:125), and 21-23 May near Mason City in *Cerro Gordo* (2014-18, A-P, IBL 84:125).

**Painted Bunting:** 5-6 May at St. Charles in *Madison* (2014-13, A-P, IBL 84:125).

**Hooded Oriole:** 9-10 May at Ames in *Story* (2014-20, A-P, IBL 84:125 [Eischeid and Dinsmore 2015]).

**Brambling:** 5 May at Peterson in *Clay* (2014-12, A-P, IBL 84:125).

**Pine Grosbeak:** 20-22 Dec at ISU Horticulture Farm in *Story* (2014-61, A-P, IBL 85:54).

## 2014 RECORDS NOT ACCEPTED

**Greater Prairie-Chicken:** A bird well out of range and observed flying away from a moving vehicle at highway speeds left much room for doubt (2014-03).

**Clark's Grebe:** A bird that was well-studied and documented by many made the rounds on the Internet for some help with the ID with opinions coming from

both camps. The final conclusion was that there were too many characteristics that did not make this bird a definite Clark's or Western and it was left as intermediate (2014-05, *IBL* 84:105).

**Brown Pelican:** Multiple birds in a cornfield with American White Pelicans were probably misidentified discolored birds of the latter species (2014-15).

**Costa's Hummingbird:** A brief view without optics and under drizzly conditions provided suggestive but insufficient evidence to positively add this species to Iowa's list. Although a majority of members felt the details were enough to place it into the *Calypte* genus, there was not a consensus to accept as such (2014-55, 2014-55G).

**Gyr Falcon:** After some discussion the

committee agreed that not all points in the description fit the ID and a Krider's Red-tail was not discussed (2014-53).

**Pacific Wren:** Plumage description on this silent wren was suggestive but with our knowledge of Pacific Wren identification still growing it was felt that audio was necessary to confirm the ID (2014-06).

**Lark Bunting:** A second-hand report of a potential breeding bird was determined to be an interesting possibility but lack of details prevented confirmation (2014-37).

**Black-headed Grosbeak:** Consensus after reviewing a photo was that this was a molting Rose-breasted Grosbeak, probably a young male (2014-26).

**Pine Grosbeak:** Images were of an unusually bright House Finch (2014-38).

#### LITERATURE CITED

- Dinsmore, S. J. 2014a. Horned Grebe nesting at Eagle Lake. *Iowa Bird Life* 84:169.
- Dinsmore, S. J. 2014b. Fish Crow at Saylorville Reservoir. *Iowa Bird Life* 84:172-173.
- Dinsmore, S. J., and C. W. Lundy. 2014. Roseate Spoonbill in Fremont County. *Iowa Bird Life* 84:170-171.
- Eischeid, C., and S. J. Dinsmore. 2015. Hooded Oriole in Story County. *Iowa Bird Life* 85:74.
- Harms, T. M. 2015. Common Raven in Polk County. *Iowa Bird Life* 85:34-35.

I thank Paul Hertzell for checking all of the inclusive dates against field reports data so that this report is an accurate representation of rare bird sightings in Iowa.

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# Iowa Ornithologists' Union Business Meeting

29 August 2015

The I.O.U. fall business meeting was held at Comfort Inn in Ft. Madison, Iowa. President Francis Moore called the meeting to order at 4:05 P.M. In attendance were Dennis Thompson, vice-president; Stuart Sparkman, secretary; Mary Beth Hunt, treasurer; directors at large Candace Havely, Gerald White, Tyler Harms, Linda Rudolph, and Karen Viste-Sparkman, and members of the organization.

**Secretary's Report:** President Moore asked the body's permission to dispense with the reading of the minutes by the secretary. The body assented. Kathy Conrad moved that all minutes for the 22-23 May 2015 meetings be approved as written. John Rutenbeck seconded. The motion carried.

**Treasurer's Report:** Mary Beth Hunt gave a brief summary of our financial status. Both balance sheet and profit/loss comparison documents were offered. The body was reminded that year by year comparisons should be made with caution, as our various bills come due and are paid at irregular intervals from year to year. Net income has been healthy, and recent meeting financial reports have finished in the black. At this point it looks as if the organization could finish the year under budget. Members can always access financial reports through the I.O.U. website.

**Membership Coordinator's Report:** Membership Coordinator Cecille Thompson presented a report. The most current membership number is 398. The organization has received 36 new members since the beginning of the year. Some of these are former members whose membership had lapsed.

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

**Publications Committee:** Ann Johnson reported that the year's first issue of *Iowa Bird Life* has been published and

the second will be coming soon. John Bissell reminded the body that he is always looking for articles for the I.O.U. Newsletter.

**Records Committee:** Chair Paul Hertzel spoke on behalf of the Records Committee. He informed the group of the membership of the committee. They reviewed two records for the winter quarter, ten for spring, and an additional two are pending. The entire process is now electronic. The committee will hold a face-to-face meeting on 25 October in Ames.

**Membership Committee:** Paul Skrade offered a report on behalf of the Membership Committee. New updated checklists are available and there are new items being offered for sale. The recently published I.O.U. Yellow Book can be purchased online through the merchandise page on [iowabirds.org](http://iowabirds.org). New members get a free copy of the Yellow Book, and an I.O.U. decal. The group is considering updating the "fledgling member" fee by extending it to students of all ages. The committee wants to offer benefits to members. These currently include RBA notification through Twitter exclusively for I.O.U. members. This has already attracted several new members. Paul has been contacting lapsed members to learn why they left the group.

**Projects Committee:** Tyler Harms

briefly spoke about the goal of branding projects with the I.O.U. logo to promote awareness of the organization and its contributions to bird conservation. There are plans to provide small signs at project locations where appropriate and logo stickers on some physical objects such as binoculars purchased through grant money from the Projects committee. The costs of this are still being investigated.

**Library/Historical Committee:** Candace Havely spoke on behalf of chair Hank Zalatel. Some archival documents will soon be received from Carl Bendorf which date from his years as I.O.U. president. These materials will join the special collections at the Iowa State University library. These archives can be visited by anyone during normal library hours.

**Personal Privilege:** Carl Bendorf thanked the organization for its support of Iowa Young Birders. Carl is moving to Colorado, but Iowa Young Birders will carry on their activities under the leadership of Tyler Harms.

**Meetings Report:** Vice President Dennis Thompson reported that there were 83 attendees at this year's spring meeting, and the event ended up financially in the black. The spring meeting in 2016 will be based in Ames and Big Bluestem Audubon will assist with hosting and organizing. This event is being planned for 13-15 May. No location for a fall 2016 meeting has been determined.

**Events Committee:** This ad hoc committee was created by past president Paul Roisen for the purpose of organizing field trips and educational events outside of

the I.O.U. semiannual meetings. President Moore announced that committee members Eric Ollie and Tyler Harms are discussing plans for these sorts of events. Eric addressed the body briefly. It is hoped that such events can become a recruiting tool and a value-added activity to benefit I.O.U. members.

#### UNFINISHED BUSINESS

**I.O.U. Survey:** Paul Skrade spoke about a survey prepared by a committee of I.O.U. members which grew out of a general dissatisfaction about the organization's ability to retain members. This survey has been completed and is ready to be disseminated to both members and non-members through I.O.U. website, the Iowa birding Facebook group, the I.O.U. Twitter account, and perhaps additional avenues. Fashioned after a survey by the American Birding Association, the primary objective of this instrument is to discover why a person becomes a member, remains a member, refuses membership, and/or lets membership lapse. The survey asks of responders "How can the I.O.U. serve your birding-related needs?" The survey will be implemented soon. Paul thanked various members who provided feedback on a draft of the survey.

A motion to adjourn was made by Doug Harr. Candace Havely seconded, and the motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 4:49 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,  
Stuart Sparkman, secretary

# Iowa Ornithologists' Union

## Board of Directors Meeting

28 August 2015

**The I.O.U. fall board meeting** was held at Comfort Inn in Ft. Madison, IA. President Francis Moore called the meeting to order at 8:20 P.M. Attending were vice-president Dennis Thompson, secretary Stuart Sparkman, treasurer Mary Beth Hunt, and directors at large Gerald White, Karen Viste-Sparkman, Linda Rudolph, Candace Havely, and Tyler Harms. Attending as a guest was Eric Ollie.

**Welcome:** President Moore welcomed the Board of Directors and thanked everyone for their willingness to meet on Friday night.

**Secretary's Report:** The Board of Directors unanimously approved the minutes from both meetings taking place at the spring meeting near Algona. These minutes have yet to be published in an I.O.U. publication, therefore board members agreed that copies of these minutes would be posted in the meeting room in advance of the general business meeting the following day.

**Treasurer's Report:** Mary Beth Hunt gave a brief summary of our financial status. Both balance sheet and profit/loss comparison documents were provided. The board was reminded that year by year comparisons should be made with caution, as our various bills come due and are paid at irregular intervals from year to year. Net meeting income has been healthy, and recent meeting financial reports have finished in the black. At this point it looks as if the organization could finish the year under budget.

I.O.U. has received a bequest from the estate of late member Tom Lawson. It is requested that the money be used to enhance bird life and habitat in Iowa. It was felt that I.O.U.-sponsored projects may be a good use of these funds. The board agreed that an article should appear in an I.O.U. publica-

tion which informs members of this generous gift.

**Membership Coordinator's Report:** President Moore presented data on behalf of chair Cecille Thompson. Our current membership totals 398, including 36 "new" members, classified as paid memberships which are not renewals. A short discussion ensued on care of new members. Offering gifts (such as I.O.U. water bottles), correspondence, and personal contacts were suggested. Paul Roisen may be willing to act as the organization's ambassador to its new members. Suggestions from the board will be shared with the membership committee, which will present its report at tomorrow's general business meeting.

### UNFINISHED BUSINESS

**Events Committee:** Eric Ollie was present for a discussion on the events committee. The committee includes Eric, as well as Dennis Thompson, Paul Roisen, and Brandon Caswell. It is hoped that field trips can begin around the state before long. Ideas for group field trips were shared, including trips to adjoining states and beyond. Combined field trip/education events may be desired, which could include a bird identification class or other "value added" activity beneficial to members. No board action was taken.

**Survey Committee:** Tyler Harms has incorporated comments and suggestions from the board in response to a look at the proposed survey. Mary Beth moved that the board approve the survey providing latitude for changes in response to comments from the body at large. Linda seconded, and the motion carried. The organization will receive a report from the committee at the general business meeting.

**Breeding Bird Atlas:** Delays have occurred in moving the project along. Species accounts are still being written for the atlas. Specifics on progress are not known. Mary Beth remarked that money pledged by I.O.U. to this project which is waiting to be disbursed could be earning better interest in a certificate of deposit. Inquiries will be made about the status of the project.

#### NEW BUSINESS

**Projects Committee:** Tyler reported again on signage and labeling in conjunction with I.O.U. sponsored projects. He present-

ed a sample of an engraved sign. The board advised one more price comparison before final purchase decision is made.

**Meetings Report:** Dennis reported that there were 83 attendees at this year's spring meeting, and the event ended up financially in the black. The spring meeting in 2016 will be based in Ames and Big Bluestem Audubon will assist with hosting and organizing. It is being planned for 13-15 May. There was a discussion in which speakers for upcoming meetings were suggested. No location for a fall 2016 meeting has been determined.

**Budget Meeting:** A date of 22 November 2015 was suggested for a budget meeting in Oskaloosa. No decision was made.

A motion to adjourn was made by Tyler. Karen seconded, and the motion carried. The board of directors meeting was adjourned at 9:14 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,  
Stuart Sparkman, secretary

## Iowa Ornithologists' Union Winter Board and Budget Meeting

*22 November 2015*

The I.O.U. winter board business and budget meeting was held at Hunt and Associates in Oskaloosa, Iowa. President Francis Moore called the meeting to order at 10:59 A.M. In attendance were Dennis Thompson, vice-president; Stuart Sparkman, secretary; Mary Beth Hunt, treasurer; and directors Gerald White, Candace Havely, Karen Viste-Sparkman, Tyler Harms, and Linda Rudolph. Attending as guests were members Ann Johnson, Eric Ollie, Paul Skrade, and Hank Zaletel.

#### BUSINESS AGENDA

**Financial Issues:** Dennis spoke about a bequest of the estate of Tom Lawson in the approximate amount of \$5,424. The

will has stipulated that the funds be spent on bird conservation. Discussion centered on the money being disbursed through the Projects Committee. There is an existing

memorial fund containing which has been a source of funding for various I.O.U. projects and activities in the past, where these funds may temporarily reside for accounting purposes. A project in Dallas County, where Tom lived and was active in conservation, may be the most appropriate use for these funds. It was felt that Tom's name should appear on a plaque or he should be otherwise publicly acknowledged by name in an appropriate way when the funds are put to use.

Bookkeeping can be improved with the cooperation of those providing and requesting funds. Members and committee chairs are reminded and encouraged to provide the treasurer with clear explanations for bills and payments so that the proper account can be credited or debited. Currently a lack of accompanying explanations will frequently require the treasurer to guess about the accounting of funds.

**Membership Issues:** Paul Skrade presented a report on the survey project previously approved by the board. There have been 123 respondents so far for the survey, which will close in five days. Paul has corresponded with some lapsed members with generally positive results. Some preliminary observations were shared, including a feeling that costs were too high. The Membership Committee proposes the following: that the fledgling category expand to include students of any age, that the cost of fledgling membership increase from \$12 to \$20, and that student membership include access to only electronic copies of publications (unless the subscriber wishes to pay an extra \$10 for hard copies). Ensuing discussion covered ways to generate more interest among college students, the merits of electronic membership only and whether current members would embrace such an option, the fairness of offering this option to

only student members, and the paradoxical increase in printing costs if copy numbers were to fall too low. There was a suggestion that an ad hoc committee might be formed to look into producing fewer hard copies, and the feeling was that the board wishes to wait on this until complete and formal results from the survey are examined. Tyler Harms moved the three membership committee suggestions, effective 1 January 2017, allowing a year to conform to the bylaws on changing dues. Candace Havelly seconded. The motion carried.

The membership committee continues to look for ways to increase the visibility of I.O.U. One potential item is a microfiber lens cloth with the I.O.U. logo, which could be distributed to new members as well as old members who attend meetings. The committee has managed a "store" until now, stocked with estimated numbers of items to have on hand. The committee is determined to move to a hosted online store for a variety of reasons, notably so that inventory does not need to be transported from meeting to meeting. One down side is that cost per item will go up in the absence of bulk purchasing. It has not been determined whether people would order items themselves or through membership committee at a meeting. The membership committee will be meeting in Ames in January 2016.

**Breeding Bird Atlas:** The board expressed an interest in the status of this project. President Moore agreed to make a request for information about the progress of the BBA. I.O.U. funds allocated for this project have been waiting for disbursement, and there was discussion about whether the organization could be earning interest on these monies if we had an idea when this money will be debited.

**Upcoming Meetings:** The next meeting of the I.O.U. will be in Ames the week-



end of 14-15 May 2016. Big Bluestem Audubon Society will partner with the organization to host the event. The scheduled keynote speaker is Partners in Flight's Mary Gustafson, who works on the conservation of Mexican grasslands. One potential fall meeting site is the Iowa Great Lakes area of northwestern Iowa. Interest was also expressed in a future meeting in the Dubuque area, although we have few members in that area. Dennis Thompson will make some inquiries about meeting in that region. A possible joint meeting with Illinois or Wisconsin could be considered in the next few years. The fall 2015 meeting in Ft. Madison finished in the black.

**Annual Audit:** President Moore has worked on the annual audit for some years now. A new person to do an external audit is now needed. Some names were suggested and inquiries will be made.

**Events Committee (ad hoc):** Eric Ollie spoke about plans and activities of the events committee. The first field trip the group offered took place in October, an outing to the Grammer Grove hawk watch site in Marshall County. Eight people attended and experienced a good birding day and an encouraging start to the committee's endeavors. Currently in the planning stage is a gull identification workshop with some classroom instruction and some field work. The Quad Cities area was suggested for a site. Ideas from the board were shared with the committee, which was encouraged to request funds for the upcoming year to support its planning and implementation.

**Records Committee:** The term of Aaron Brees is expiring. Mary Beth Hunt moved that Paul Skrade be his replacement for a 6-year term, and Tyler Harms seconded. The motion carried.

**Member Care Protocol:** The question arose whether there is a policy regarding an

obituary for deceased members in I.O.U. news. They have appeared in the past. The board affirmed the practice of including such items as the editor becomes aware of them.

The business portion of this meeting concluded at 12:38 P.M. The group began the budget discussion at 12:39 P.M.

#### BUDGET AGENDA

**Publications:** Ann Johnson suggested omitting life members from the membership number when calculating the budget request for the publications committee. The committee requests \$10,740 for the upcoming year.

**Projects:** The projects committee is requesting \$5,000, not including the Lawson bequest.

**Other:** I.O.U. is making some decent money (around \$800 in the current year) from online sales through amazon.com and Eagle Optics. Linda Rudolph volunteered to remind members to purchase through these online portals to benefit I.O.U.

Placards and stickers crediting I.O.U. with project contributions will be available soon.

Doug Hunt visited briefly about whether I.O.U. should be investing more of our funds in CDs. The board affirmed that the treasurer may do so at her discretion. Interest rates for CDs are poor now, so it is not advised at this time.

The board continued through each line item and allocated a budget amount for each one for the next fiscal year. Annual financial records are posted in a timely manner on [iowabirds.org](http://iowabirds.org). Members can access this information through that online resource, and can request information on the budget from the I.O.U. treasurer or other officers.

A motion was offered by Linda Ru-

dolph to approve the 2016 budget. The motion was seconded by Gerald White, and carried.

Linda Rudolph also offered a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Karen

Viste-Sparkman. The motion carried, and the meeting adjourned at 2:18 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,  
Stuart Sparkman, secretary

## **Fifty Years Ago in *Iowa Bird Life***

*James J. Dinsmore*

Almost half of the September 1965 issue of *Iowa Bird Life* consisted of an article by Terrance Ingram on the Bald Eagles wintering at Guttenberg, Iowa and nearby Cassville, Wisconsin. Most of the article involves data collected on the birds at Cassville but Ingram suggests that it would also apply to eagles at Guttenberg. There the birds were concentrated around two power plants and Lock and Dam #10 at Guttenberg. Maximum counts were about 180 eagles with peak numbers in late fall and early spring. The author knew of five eagle roosts on the Wisconsin side of the river and assumed that roosts were also present in Iowa. This study provides a variety of information on these wintering eagles.

In another paper, John Faaborg and Dave Bucklin describe the use of bridges and culverts as nesting sites by Rock Pigeon, Eastern Phoebe, Cliff Swallow, Barn Swallow, American Robin, and House Sparrow. House Sparrow, Cliff Swallow, and Barn Swallow nests were the most numerous with all three species nesting commonly over water. The swallows most commonly nested on concrete bridges whereas House Sparrows were found most often on iron bridges.

The fall I.O.U. meeting was held 18-19 September at Jester Park north of Des Moines. First started in 1949, for many years fall meetings were less formal than the spring one and did not have a business meeting or formal program. The 1965 meeting started Saturday evening with a reception and a slide show on birds by Mrs. Harold Whitmus of Lincoln, Nebraska. Field trips on Sunday morning visited Jester Park and nearby areas. Listed attendees totaled 110, a big turnout for a fall meeting. A total of 75 bird species was found. As expected, in this pre-Saylorville Dam and Reservoir era, few waterbirds were found.

Because the last issue of *Iowa Bird Life* for 1965 will only contain the 5-year index, both the summer and fall field reports were included in this issue. Some of the more interesting reports for summer included Red-necked, Horned, and Western grebes and King Rail, all in June, and 8 Burrowing Owls at Sioux City. The fall reports included a flight of an estimated 5,000 Broad-winged Hawks in late September and a Purple Finch and Pine Siskins in September.

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**ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES** (renewable yearly): Fledgling (students) \$15, Institutional (domestic) \$30, Institutional (foreign) \$45, Goldfinch \$30, Bluebird \$35, Oriole \$50, Egret \$75, Osprey \$100, Bald Eagle \$250, and Peregrine Falcon \$500+. Membership dues entitle members to receive *Iowa Bird Life* and *IOU News* quarterly and to vote and hold office in the Union. Contributions are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. Join, give a gift, or manage your membership on-line at <[www.iowabirds.org](http://www.iowabirds.org)>. Paper forms for new members and renewals may be mailed to the treasurer. Back issues of *Iowa Bird Life* are available from Membership Coordinator Pam Allen, 7955 Wistful Vista Dr., #20, West Des Moines, IA 50266 (2birders@hickorytech.net).

**INSTRUCTIONS TO AUTHORS:** Original manuscripts, notes, letters (indicate if for publication), editorials, and other material relating to birds in Iowa should be sent by e-mail attachment in Microsoft Word to editor. Research manuscripts should include abstract, introduction, study area, methods, results, discussion, and literature cited sections and will be sent for peer review. Accepted manuscripts will be published promptly depending on space available.

**Photos and graphics:** Submit only original, unsized, and unenhanced photos in your camera's JPEG (\*.jpg) format. Photos must be 300 dpi at the size they will be printed (6-1/2" wide by 6-1/2" high for the cover and various smaller sizes inside), so setting your camera to its highest possible resolution is recommended. The editor will do any resizing and enhancing required because any previous adjustments to the photos may make them unusable. Submit photos and graphics as e-mail attachments.

E-mail all material other than seasonal reports to editor at [cootjr@iastate.edu](mailto:cootjr@iastate.edu). Deadlines for submission are **January 1 for winter issue** (Vol. xx[1]), **April 1 for spring issue** [2], **July 1 for summer issue** [3], **October 1 for fall issue** [4]. Send seasonal field reports to field reports editors by deadlines listed on inside front cover.

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**IOU WEB SITE:** <[www.iowabirds.org](http://www.iowabirds.org)>, Ann Johnson, Webmaster

**IOWA RBA:** John Bissell ([john.annabissell@gmail.com](mailto:john.annabissell@gmail.com))

**CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT:** Deadline for receipt of reports is 15 January. For forms and instructions, contact Christopher J. Caster, 1813 Liberty Lane, Coralville, IA 52241 ([cjcaster@q.com](mailto:cjcaster@q.com)).

**BIRD SIGHTINGS:** Subscribe at <[www.iowabirds.org](http://www.iowabirds.org)>

**ADDRESS CHANGES:** Update your on-line profile at <[www.iowabirds.org](http://www.iowabirds.org)> or send address and e-mail changes to Membership Coordinator Cecille Thompson, 7503 Wildflower Ct., Johnston, IA 50131 ([cndthomps@acm.org](mailto:cndthomps@acm.org)).

**UPCOMING MEETINGS OF THE IOWA ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION:** Spring: 13–15 May 2016, Ames.

**FRONT COVER PHOTO:** Eastern Screech-Owl, near Wellman, Johnson, 5 March 2015. Photograph by Adam W. Ciha, Hills, IA.

**BACK COVER PHOTO:** Great Egret, Summerset SP, Warren, 9 April 2015. Photograph by Richard S. Wacha, Des Moines, IA.

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